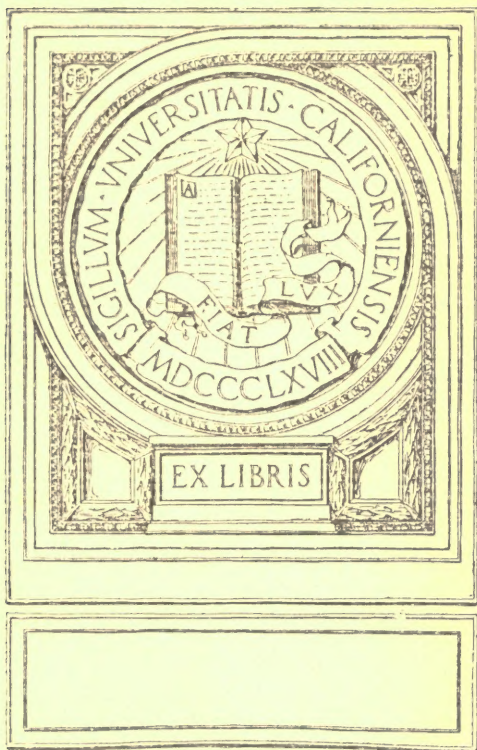


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FRONTISPIECE.



ROSAND DISCOVERS AMANDA,  
OR THE REVELATION.

ROSANO & AMANDA,  
AND THE  
CONFESSOR RALDINO.

BY

*Miss Louisa Smith.*







THE  
HISTORY OF  
ROSANO AND AMANDA,  
AND THE  
CONFESSOR RALDINO.

BY MRS. HANNAH SMITH.

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Grey Superstition's whisper dread  
Debarred the spot to vulgar tread;  
For there, she said, did Fays resort,  
And spectres hold their nightly court,  
By moonlight tread their mystic maze,  
And blast the rash beholder's gaze.

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# ROSANO AND AMANDA.

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## CHAPTER I.

---

'Twas all so close with copse wood bound,  
Nor tract nor path-way might declare,  
That human foot frequented there.

Previous to entering into the history at large, it will be necessary to give a short account of the manner by which the narratives and incidents were obtained. Our party happening to make an excursion not far from the environs of Naples, we beheld a most magnificent portico, the beauty of which led to an investigation of the interior of the building. It was the church of *Santa Maria del Pianto*. While viewing the entrance of the church, we were forcibly struck with the appearance of a person, impressive in his manner, and apparently lost in deep thought, who stood leaning against one of the pillars in the side aisle. On our entering he was



startled by the sound of approaching footsteps, and quickly retreated towards the farther end of the aisle, and disappeared. This tall thin figure, pale emaciated complexion, ferocious eye, and face half hid, concealed under a black cowl and cloak, excited the strongest interest and curiosity to know more about him.

On entering the church, nobody was to be seen but a Friar who came from an adjoining convent, to answer the questions of inquisitive strangers. We had examined for some time the grandeur of this beautiful structure, the elegance and magnificence of which far surpassed anything of the kind we had yet seen, when on returning from viewing one of the most curious parts of this ancient pile—the same mysterious person was observed endeavouring to conceal himself behind one of the heavy columns which supported the entrance to the confessional. The Friar was questioned about him and who he was. The Interrogated replied calmly—

“That man is a murderer—an assassin!”

Upon hearing this, the greatest astonishment was expressed by the whole party, that he should be at liberty. But we were soon informed that he had taken refuge within the walls of the convent, and strange as it might appear, that such was the superstition of the people, that they came in crowds to bring him food, for that the church laws protected him.

“Dreadful!” exclaimed an English gentleman of the party; “assassination to remain unpunished!”

“If these crimes were to be punished in this country as with you,” replied our Italian friend, “the country would suffer much in its population: but,” said he “have

you attentively observed yonder gloomy Confessional, on the left side of the aisle?"

We now turned our attention to a room of a dark and gloomy appearance, the same where the assassin had recently entered. It contained a black canopy, under an elevated chair for the Confessor: on either side was a gloomy and terrific closet, with steps leading to a grated partition, in which the penitent kneeling, confessed the heinousness of his crimes. This frightful spot made us shudder, and on leaving it our friend promised to lend us the confession and history of the mysterious Monk to read, with other circumstantial information relative, when we had time and leisure to peruse it.

"I thought confessions were never divulged by the priest," interrupted one of the party.

"Just so," was the reply of the Italian; "but a command from a higher power can dispense with this law, and in this particular instance it was granted."

After once more inspecting the awful confessional, we quitted the church of Santa Maria del Pianto, leaving the Monk in it, who was now stealing from that room of terrors, across the choir, and seemed equally happy with ourselves at the separation. We lengthened our excursion for some hours, to view the surrounding country, the beauties of which occupied our time and attention during the whole day. We visited Mount Vesuvius, the awful wonders of which have been described by so many authors. In the evening we returned to the delightful villa of our Italian friend, to regale on the choicest fruits of his extensive vineyards, and to partake of the most delicious beverage his hospitality could af-

ford. Some of the most distinguished Neapolitan families were invited to meet us on our return, and the evening was concluded with music and dancing. At a late hour the party broke up, and it was agreed that on the following day we should meet at our Italian friends' again, to hear some particulars relative to our excursion, and he promised then to lend us the manuscript confession, made at the dreadful place we had been to see; accordingly we waited upon him at his elegant chateau, the following day: we spent a few hours in viewing his enchanting residence, vineyards, orange groves, and gardens: during which he gave us the promised information, and lent the manuscript to read, the contents of which ran as follows:

Of all the modest, dignified, and engaging females who paid their devotions at the church of San Lorenza at Naples, Amanda Lusinette was the most lovely and interesting. The melody of her voice corresponded with the graces and delicacy of her figure, and the tones which, with the most exquisite expression she uttered, led to a farther anxiety in the mind of the beholder, to inspect the countenance whence such heavenly strains proceeded.

This lovely maid out shone all the beauties of Naples: it was not alone the dazzling complexion, or the brilliancy of her eyes that engaged attention, or made the deep impression on the heart: it was the divine emanation of her noble mind which gave such irresistible attractions to the lovely features of Amanda, and drew each heart a willing captive to her charms. Unconscious of her power, this charming beauty treated all with that



interesting candour which innocence and virtue can alone possess, and which so powerfully attracts congenial minds.

Attractions like these were not lost on the heart of the all-accomplished, intrepid, and susceptible Rosano di Salvo, who happening to enter church at the time she was at her devotions, the heavenly strains she uttered, attracted his attention towards her, and struck with the sight of the beauteous object near him, he remained transfixed to the spot during the remainder of the morning service, absorbed in the contemplation of this veiled terrestrial divinity. At length the service being concluded, she quitted the church, leaning on the arm of an elderly lady, who from her appearance, and the great care and attention she seemed to take of her charge, he judged to be her mother. Di Salvo followed them from the church, at a small distance, till he saw them enter the arch-way that led into the garden of their residence. Di Salvo enquired what was the name of their abode, and was informed it was the villa Altiere, and that it was the Signora Marietta and her niece Amanda Lusinette, who had just entered.

Di Salvo returned home with a heart beating fervently with admiration, and a desire to have another glimpse of the lovely fair one, and which it was his resolve to do on the morrow, if possible. Rosano di Salvo was the only child of the noble marquis of that name. He had been brought up from his infancy with the greatest care and tenderness, and sent to Rome to complete his education. A tall and graceful stature, a handsome figure, with a naturally sensible, and greatly endowed under-

standing : witty, valiant, and indeed every requisite characteristic to form the complete gentleman, added to which was a great name and high pedigree. The old Marquis prided himself upon his descent, and was rigidly proud. He married in early life the present Marchioness, a woman of strong passions, but weak mind and understanding; proud and haughty to a degree; indeed family pride was her most predominant passion, as the sequel of this narrative will prove.

As long as the Marquis and Marchioness had any controul over their son, they were particularly careful lest he should form an acquaintance, or conceive a passion for any woman that might in the least affect the dignity of their family pride. Hitherto they had no fears to apprehend on that ground; one family of distinction they had been most intimately acquainted with from early life, and their fullest hopes were fixed, nay even pledged to each other for an alliance with their children. Time, that proves the event of all things, will shew how far such rigid expectations are in general fulfilled.

In this interesting narrative we shall prove the fallacy of the harsh means and cruel treatment of tyrannical parents to their children. How often do we see the fondest affections blasted, and the sweetest flowers blighted ere they come to maturity, and if death does not sever the affectionate hearts thus linked together by every tender endearment; sorrow and disappointment, the trouble and anguish of separation, not only injure the youthful constitution, but often bring on a premature old age. The particulars and events detailed in this

narrative, will prove the truth of what has been alledged.

The deep impression the lovely Amanda had made on the heart of Rosano di Salvo, was not to be shaken. Often did he repair to the Villa Altiere or the church, in order to gaze again on her lovely form. One evening he stole into the gardens unperceived, and at an open window of the Villa, he beheld the beauteous Amanda sitting; he crept under the window and heard her speak, but could not distinctly hear what she was saying.

The moon was rising lovely above the horison, and as she ascended in clouded majesty, her light threw on the face of nature, a grandeur sublime and impressive. Di Salvo felt its effect upon his mind; and, as at intervals she threw her pale light on the window where sat the object of his adoration, he gazed upon her, until he became absorbed in an extacy of rapture not to be described. After sitting at the open window for some time, with her head reclined on her hand, contemplating the beautiful orb of night, she suddenly arose from her seat and went across the room, but instantly she returned with her lute, and taking her seat again at the open window, she accompanied herself on the instrument, to the following beautiful lines;

### TO THE MOON.

Oh, lovely goodess of the night,  
As oft in pensive mood I stray,  
Thro' groves illumined by thy light,  
I hate the glare of day.

I love to wander 'mong the hills,  
When thou shed'st wide thy softening ray,  
O'er trees and towers and gliding rills,  
More pleasing far than day.

And while I breath the air of even,  
Let me my grateful homage pay,  
To Him who for our joy has given,  
The night as well as day.

She paused, and Di Salvo, entranced almost beyond description, could have listened the live-long night to such heavenly strains. In the height of his rapturous feelings—he took out his lute, and responded to the beautiful air she sung.

Amanda, startled at the sounds she heard, instantly retreated from the window, and it was long ere Di Salvo had a sight of her again. He many times had seen the Signora, her aunt, since, and had conversed with her, but never could learn any thing to relieve his mind with regard to her niece, except that she was well. He had many times visited the garden again, in hopes of seeing her, but without success. One day as he was returning from his favourite haunt, he met his friend Lozano de Grazio, who joined him in a ramble among the rocks and underwoods of the surrounding country. They had wandered for some time, mutually delighted with their excursion, and chatted upon a variety of subjects; when on turning suddenly an abrupt winding of the path, they came in sight of some ruins that appeared at the distance to be those of an old ruined

fortress and tower, quite overshadowed with tall pines and the thickest underwood and trees.

"What ruins are these?" said Lozaro.

"I do not recollect," was the reply of his friend. "However I should like to know," and for this purpose went to enquire at a neat small cabin just by the path side. He was met at the door by a venerable old man, who informed him they were the ruins of the old fortress of Paluzzi, and that strange reports and tales concerning deeds committed there, had been circulated at different periods; that for his part he did not care ever to go near them, for that almost every night strange noises were heard, and that spectres bearing torches had been seen at midnight, stalking through the different apartments and avenues, and the most hideous and dreadful shrieks had been heard at different times, yet no one dared to go near there.

"I will explore them if possible," said Di Salvo, and for this purpose they left the old man, and took their way direct towards the ruins. It was with some difficulty they made their way up the ascent to the fortress, the long weeds and rubbish had so overgrown the path-way. At last having reached the summit, they wound round the best road they could find, till they came to what they supposed to be the entrance. They entered through one of the deep arch-way, and had not proceeded far when they heard a strange rumbling noise within, and at the end of the passage appeared a tall, gigantic figure, dressed in the habit of a monk, who instantly rushing by them, disappeared among the ruins, leaving the two friends struck almost dumb, for a few moments at his appearance.

Lozaro advised his friend to return from this gloomy spot into the more open space, as he said, perhaps the place might be inhabited by a set of smugglers, or villains, who would not be interrupted with impunity. But this Di Salvo strongly opposed, as exposing themselves to observation; and then if there was any danger of that to apprehend, it would be giving the enemy time to prepare, if they saw their approach. At all risks he was determined to investigate the place, and know, if possible, who was the mysterious being who had thus surprised and staggered them so instantaneously. For this purpose Di Salvo now took his post in one of the reefs of the arch-way, near a flight of stone steps, that seem to ascend through the rock to the fortress. Lozaro took his station by his friend's side, and they anxiously waited for some time to see if the Monk would return.

They had stood about half an hour in suspense and conjecturing who the fortress belonged to, when their conversation turned on the superstitious fears which Lozaro entertained of the reality of this gliding Monk, and some resolutions on the part of Di Salvo to openly attack him, for he felt assured in his own mind, the stranger was only disguised, and he did not fear him. While they thus stood talking and watching, Lozaro perceived the same tall figure plant itself at the entrance of the arch—discernable at that time from the twilight. Di Salvo's eyes were fixed in an opposite direction just at the time, till Lozaro seizing his arm, directed his attention to the gliding form, supposed to be that of a monk, from his appearance, and which soon disappeared again in the gloom of the arch. Di Salvo drew his sword,



and with impatience darted from his place of concealment, and with arms extended, demanded—

“Who goes there? who are you? speak.”

Lozaro also drew his sword and followed, and Di Salvo promised security and protection to the fugitive, if he would come forward and declare himself. They waited a moment, but no answer was returned.

“Somebody has just passed,” whispered Lozaro.

“I think the sound of steps seems to mount the stairs of the fortress, we will follow,” cried Di Salvo.

Lozaro remonstrated, while his friend swore he would mount alone, for it was the Monk himself, he was convinced, who had ascended. Lozaro, ashamed of deserting his friend in the hour of seeming danger, followed up the rugged steps immediately, and having reached the summit, found himself on the top of a ruined arch, which once had been strongly fortified and barricadoed, and commanded a view of the defile each way. It led to a watch tower on the opposite cliff, situated amongst the remains of massive walls, broken ramparts, and fragments of rocks covered with thick underwood, and forming a line of communication between the two outposts. Lozaro now looked in vain for his friend; nothing heard his call but Echo. After waiting a short time, he next entered the immense walls of a ruined citadel with as little success; from the darkness of which he removed into the open air, on the ramparts, calling on Di Salvo as loud as he could. While hesitating what he had best do, or which way proceed in search of his friend: he stood viewing the ruinous mass before him, when Di Salvo rushed from a concealed door-way

of the fortification, with his sword drawn, and panting for breath. Lozaro sprung forward to meet him and to make enquiries.

“Where have you been my friend, what have you seen or discovered?”

“Ask me no questions now,” said Di Salvo, “but let us leave this mysterious place instantly.”

They immediately descended to the court below, and left the fortress by another outlet of the building into the main road that led to the bay.

As they hastily passed on towards Naples, Lozaro demanded of his companion if he had seen and secured the Monk. Di Salvo hesitated a moment what to say, at last he replied—

“All is doubt and mysterious perplexity, at least for the present. But the business rests not here; to-morrow night I will return with torches and assistance, and satisfy my curiosity and doubts of the stranger’s words and mysterious appearance,”

“Then you saw him again, and he spoke to you?” said Lozaro.

“He did,” replied his friend, “and his warnings are most mysterious, prophetic, and eventful; but I will pursue him, I will know their meaning, and to-morrow night by torch light, I will—”

Here Lozaro interrupted his friend by urging that it would be more prudent to go by day light, rather than tempt the mercy of midnight robbers; for the fortress being so near the bay, he felt convinced it was the retreat and rendezvous of hoards of banditti who infested that part; and this mysterious being which they had

seen, might only be practising his arts to decoy them into his power. Di Salvo dissented from his friend in his opinion; he had that night a proof to the contrary; he considered his opinion was formed from the fear which predominated over his mind, and which produced cowardice, and insisted that the gloom of the recess and the hour of the figure's appearance, made the return at night or midnight absolutely necessary. Lozaro withheld his consent to this second expedition till the following day. He did not much like the idea of again encountering the dangers he considered there were in visiting such a place as the fortress and at midnight. Lozaro arrived with his friend at the palace Di Salvo, where they separated for the night, but agreed to meet again on the next day to make arrangements for the intended excursion. Di Salvo was admitted to the palace by his servant, and after taking a slight supper he retired to rest, meditating on the occurrences of the day, and determined in his own mind to fathom the mysteries of the fortress of Paluzzi, if possible, on the following night.



## CHAPTER XXIV.

With sudden start he turned to view the Stranger—  
He had appeared, and had was silent as the tomb.

Business of importance having prevented Lozaro from attending his friend on the following day, as agreed,

towards evening Di Salvo again repaired to the spot which contained his lovely enchantress. He had wandered for some time about the garden, and near the house, without ever seeing or hearing any one. At last a light appearing at one of the lower windows, attracted his attention, and on a nearer approach, he perceived one of the attendants enter the saloon with a light, and placing it on the side table, withdrew. This room led into the garden by folding doors. As the maid retired, Di Salvo approached to take a near survey of the apartment, the glass doors of which were partly open, and to his astonishment and delight, he beheld Amanda reclining on a couch, apparently lost in deep meditation. He stood gazing some time in hopes she would move, and again enchant him with her lute, which lay by her side; at last she arose from her reclining posture, took up her lute, and after turning over the leaves of a book which lay on a table near her, she struck the chords of her instrument to a most enchanting air, which she accompanied with her angelic voice to the following words:

### THE MOSS ROSE.

The angel of the flowers, one day  
Beneath a rose tree sleeping lay;  
That spirit—to whose charge is given,  
To bathe young buds in dew from heaven,  
Awakening from his light repose,  
The angel whispered to the rose,  
“O fondest object of my care,  
Still fairest found where all are fair,

For the sweet shade thou giv'st to me,  
Ask what thou wilt, 'tis granted thee."  
"Then," said the Rose, with deepened glow,  
"On me another grace bestow."  
The Spirit paused in silent thought,  
What grace was there that flowers had not,  
'Twas lent a moment o'er the Rose,  
A veil of moss the Angel throws ;  
And rob'd in nature's simplest weed,  
Can there a flower that Rose exceed ?

"Ah no," she mentally exclaimed.

She laid down her lute and began turning over the leaves of her book. Di Salvo was transfixed to the spot; the strains he had just heard had entranced with rapture all his senses; he feared to move lest he should disturb her. He wished to enter and throw himself at her feet, and declare the passion with which she had inspired him, but true love is ever timid. While he stood irresolute, gazing upon her, a large bat which had been flitting about, attracted by the light, flew into the room from the garden. Amanda perceived it as it came near her, and giving a violent shriek, she ran to the other side of the apartment. Di Salvo led by the impulse of the moment, rushed into the room to endeavour to calm her fears; but his appearance only added to her alarm, while she exclaimed—

"Ah, Signor Di Salvo! how came you?"

He gently approached her, and taking her hand, endeavoured to convince her she had nothing to apprehend.



While thus engaged, her aunt, alarmed by the violence of the shriek, entered the apartment with some of the attendants in the greatest agitation. The cause of the fright having been explained and removed, Di Salvo made an attempt to apologise for his intrusion. The last time he had seen and conversed with the old lady, he had in part disclosed his passion for her lovely niece and had implored an interview, but as yet it had not been granted him. Signora Marietta now turning to her niece desired her to retire for a while, and endeavour to compose herself. Then with some degree of displeasure depicted in her countenance, she turned to Di Salvo and expressed her surprise and astonishment at finding him there; as she had not, she said, been apprised of his visit, nor indeed of any one having entered the house that evening. She felt convinced he must have entered in some secret way, and she most rigidly expressed her displeasure at any such conduct. Nor did she believe her niece capable of giving encouragement to any clandestine interviews. Di Salvo begged to be heard, and endeavoured to remove every unpleasant suspicion from her mind, with regard either to Amanda or himself; and so far succeeded as to regain the old lady's good opinion; on obtaining permission to pay his respects to the Villa Almere again at an early day, he took his leave and departed. As he was leaving the garden to enter the avenue which led to the arched entrance, he perceived a person coming towards him. He was a tall majestic man, whose presence, as Di Salvo near him, cried—

"Stay, Signor," and then in a most awful and imperative voice and manner, forbade him ever again to ap-

proach the Villa Altiere.

An explanation of such interdiction was instantly demanded, when the same awful voice answered—

“I shall see you again,” and then disappeared.

Di Salvo would have followed the stranger, and have demanded by what authority he interfered in his visits to the Villa, but he was prevented by the darkness and thick gloom which surrounded him, from pursuing the figure into the recess where he had taken refuge. He therefore returned home to muse on the events of the evening. Frequently had he visited the spot, in the expectation of again seeing the stranger, and receiving an explanation to the mysterious warning he had given; but as yet he had not seen him again. Nearly a week had elapsed; he now therefore, determined to wait no longer, but to pay a visit to the Villa Altiere; to see the Signora Marietta, and disclose his pretensions towards her niece. On his arrival, he was ushered into the same room, where with such enthusiastic pleasure he had gazed on Amanda from the garden. He took up her lute, and tremblingly touched its chords; their sounds forcibly reminded him of her exquisite voice. A masterly drawing of a dancing nymph from Herculaneum, lay on the stand, and he also observed that this one of a set which hung round the room, and corresponded with some that decorated his father's cabinet, the only copies, it was thought, permitted to be extant from the royal Museum: the figure of Signora Marietta was not the most impressive; and when she made her appearance, it was some time before Di Salvo could explain the business of his visit, and request her interference in his favour.

"I know but too well," replied Marietta, "the haughty character of the Marquis and Marchioness di Salvo, to suppose the proposal is either known or agreeable to them; but learn, Signor Di Salvo, if Amanda is their inferior in rank, she is their equal in pride, nor will she stoop or I even sanction any clandestine proceedings."

Di Salvo, above deception, confessed the real state of his parental views, and pleaded his affection for her niece with such energy and persuasion, that the Signora Marietta thought proper not wholly to reject his suit, though she gave him but little encouragement. Her reflections on the instability of her own life, the necessity of an enquiry into the character of Amanda's suitor, and the protection she would enjoy with a kind husband and a man of honour, and both which she believed Di Salvo to be; these weighty considerations tended much to relax the rigid detestation she had of clandestine connections. They chatted for some time, during which she put many questions to him relative to the declaration he had made, and which he answered quite to her satisfaction. Di Salvo again took his leave, without seeing Amanda, but obtained her permission to renew his visit. Little encouraged by the interview he had just had; ignorant whether he had a rival or not; and lost in these reflections, he passed through the arch without seeing the stranger or ever thinking of him. When he returned home, his fixed resolution of renewing the gloomy search at midnight, at the fortress of Palazzi, was frustrated by his Mother requiring him to attend her to the Villa Pietro that evening, on a visit to the Marquis Durazza. Here he remained all the

three following days, and on his return to Naples, a note from Lozaro brought a refusal to accompany him to the fortress. Di Salvo, therefore, till he could obtain a companion to attend him, determined to relinquish the search, and resolved once again to visit the Villa Altiere. Therefore taking with him his lute, he arrived there at an earlier hour than usual. He wandered about the gardens and orange groves, in hopes he might see Amanda, and have an interview with her alone. The last time he had seen her she had pronounced his name, therefore it was evident she knew who he was, although her aunt might not have made known his passion for her.

The sun had been set about an hour, and twilight was fast sinking into night, when a light in a small pavilion of the orangery attracted his attention. When drawing near, and concealing himself behind the leaves which encircled it, he beheld Amanda thoughtfully absorbed sitting with her lute in her hand. The recollection that when he last saw her she had been alarmed at his presence, now made him pause. Yet a moment's reflection also told him that she was not ignorant who he was, for she had pronounced his name; and this idea induced him no longer to hesitate; and he was about to discover himself, when she spoke the following words in the most pathetic voice.

"Oh Di Salvo! how does the prejudice of family pride destroy our peace: but my soul is too noble to enter a family averse to receive me!"

Amanda then sounded her lute to a sweet yet melancholy air, and accompanying it with her voice, she sang the following beautiful stanzas:—

What are titles, fame and glory?  
 What is honour, wealth, or fame?  
 What to live in future story,  
 Or on our tombs - here lies the great?

Let the miser hoard his treasure,  
 The soldier seek the phantom—fame,  
 The rake pursue illicit pleasure,  
 The *noble* boast his *ancient* name.

All in life that's worth bestowing,  
 Love and friendship can bestow;  
 Love's a pure, exalted blessing,  
 Friendship soothes our care and woe.  
 I ask no more, but let me prove  
 The joys of friendship and of love.

When she had done singing, in the rapturous ebullition of his feelings at the words of the stanzas, he replied to her with his lute and voice—

Far from me false pride remove,  
 Give me friendship, give me *love*.

Amanda conscious of the sounds, had nearly fainted with surprise, and was about to retire, when Di Salvo having entered the pavilion, threw himself at her feet, and entreated, nay, implored her to stay a few moments.

“It is impossible!” said Amanda.

“Let me but hear you approve me,” said Di Salvo, “that the name you have so recently mentioned is not hateful”

“O forget that I ever uttered it—forget that you have ever heard it from me that you are—”

“Forget the solace of my solitary hours!” he replied, as he fondly gazed upon her lovely face—

“Oh never, lady! I must fly, Signor, I cannot stay, or forgive myself for what has passed!” and looking at him, a glance of tenderness irradiated her lovely countenance as she rushed from the pavilion, and left Di Salvo, as it were, looking for her in the bowers of Paradise.

Slowly did he leave this enchanted spot, to trace his way home; his feelings, from the late interview with Amanda preventing it prudent to visit her aunt that evening. On his arrival at the palace Di Salvo, finding his father and mother were not returned, he took the advantage of their absence to indulge his rapturous feelings alone. All night he alternately traversed his room, and sat down to compose a letter to Amanda, and it was only by the time the servants had arisen, that he had completed one to his satisfaction; and immediately dispatched it by a trusty messenger. After taking a slight breakfast, he took a walk as far as his friend Lezaro's, but as he was from home, he returned to enjoy his thoughts at home. On his arrival he found the Marquis returned, and received a summons to attend him in his cabinet. This diverted his mind from the delightful thoughts he had been enjoying. After some little introductory conversation, his father sternly charged him with pursuing an unwarrantable and unbecoming conduct, and with a want of decorum to the honour and dignity of his family. He then mentioned the name of Amanda Lussette and related the report of her having visited Affaire, and



that by her arts she had inveigled him into a passion for her, and also that he was become her devoted suitor.

Di Salvo confessed his passion for the lovely fair one, and declared, also, that he had not as yet reached the honour of bearing the name his father had been informed.

"You must instantly dismiss all thoughts of her," replied the Marquis; "reject her, and I will adduce proofs of her former character, which will sink her in your opinion, and stagger the most enthusiastic faith."

"By my honour and sacred word," cried Di Salvo, "Amanda is innocent of all guilt; so void of blemish, so chaste, so lovely, she is of all females the most worthy to become my wife."

"Your wife!" said the Marquis, with a disdainful and angry smile; "let but this event take place, and I disclaim you for ever."

"Cruel dictator!" said Di Salvo, "but I will support the honour of my family, by protecting, not persecuting injured innocence and goodness. You must pardon me, my lord, but there are duties which are stronger than those which a rigid parent would impose!"

This information from his father, agitated his soul to the most passionate extremes; he might as well or with equal success have attempted to hush the stormy winds, as to make him give up Amanda. He flew from the room into the thick recesses of the wood, gave way to all the horrors of despair, and at length quite exhausted with the tumult and distress of his mind, he threw himself down by a clear brook, and endeavoured to calm his feelings, and to quench a burning thirst.

Rosano left his father equally inflamed; they were each determined to adhere to their threatened purpose. What a reverse had a few minutes precipitated Di Salvo into! He loved his father, but he adored Amanda, whose insulted character he determined to avenge on the head of the original defamer, as soon as the discovery could be made. From the Marchioness he expected reproaches even more severe and painful than those of his father. If he were accused of sullyng the fair fame of Amanda, it now became an imperative duty to seek out the slanderer, and at all hazards to vindicate it. And here the words of the Marquis forcibly struck him. How could he have been informed of his nightly visits to the Villa Altiere, if the disguised stranger had not imparted the information to him? Yet his friendly warnings checked the supposition; and while he *acquitted him* of acting the character of an informer, he determined the more assiduously to pursue the base calumniator of himself and Amanda.

During these events, the Signora Marietta had informed her niece of the young nobleman's proposals. Amanda's reply was expressive of that candour which disdains affectation. She declared herself honoured by the preference he had evinced towards her: but, said she, he has a father and mother, whose pride you are not unacquainted with; and without their consent I could never stoop to enter a family averse to receive me. Her aunt applauded her sentiments: but she had learned the state of her heart on the evening when Di Salvo surprised Amanda in her apartment, and had her suspicions confirmed by the receipt of his energetic letter soon after-

wards. Yet though she approved his suit, the delicacy of Amanda presented obstacles to a clandestine union which her aunt saw it necessary to overcome.

Di Salvo, on leaving his father, passed the remainder of the day in the woods, concerting the best plan for discovering the author of his misery, and the defamer of Amanda. His suspicions were alternately fixed and wavering. As the shades of evening approached, he resolved once more to visit Altieri. He went, not in a disguised manner, but openly; and was received by the Signora Marietta, in the most polite and cordial manner. After the usual salutations and introductory conversation had passed, Di Salvo urged the subject which lay nearest his heart. The Signora heard him attentively, and then named the delicacy of Amanda's views on the subject. "That you possess her heart's best affections, I will not deny; and with regard to my consent—we will say more of that hereafter." Di Salvo forbore to repeat the late interview with his father, and before he departed, he endeavoured to find out whether any one was in the habit of visiting Altieri that could answer the riddles he had formed of the stranger. After staying until a late hour, without seeing Amanda, he returned home, with a heart somewhat lighter than when he set out. On his arrival, finding the Marquis and Marchioness from home, he indulged himself for an hour in meditating on the lovely fair one, who engrossed all his heart; and at the hazard of his very existence, he resolved to substantiate her innocence.

As he retired for the night, in passing the corridor which led to his apartment, he met the Marchioness's

confessor, who merely gave him a passing benediction, and instantly retired into an adjoining room. Di Salvo was struck with his appearance at that time of night, and wondered why he should be absent from his convent, as it was an infraction of the general rules: he looked stedfastly at him as he passed, and thought he perceived a more than usual meaning in the glaring, penetrating glance of the Monk, and his agitation of manner also struck him most forcibly. Again he felt suspicious as of him, and was determined to watch him more closely. Di Salvo passed a restless, sleepless night; strange dreams and fancies haunted his pillow, and he arose in the morning, languid and unrefreshed.

As he entered the saloon to breakfast, he met his faithful and long-tried friend, Lorio Durazzo, who informed him, that he had just arrived in company with his mother; that the Marquis had been induced to stay for a few days with his father, at the Villa Pietro. He also learnt from one of the domestics who now entered, that the Marchioness had been closeted with her confessor ever since her arrival.

Di Salvo feeling weary and unwell, from the restless night he had passed, partook but a scanty breakfast. After which, he and his friend Lorio, made an excursion for a few hours, to endeavour to recover his wonted spirits. The subject which lay nearest the heart of Di Salvo, was deposited in the faithful breast of his friend, who pledged himself to make every effort to serve him. After enjoying the freshness of the morning air, and feeling revived, and their spirits renovated, they returned to the palace of Di Salvo to dinner, where they were joined by the Marchioness and a few of her select friends, who passed the evening at the palace.

## CHAPTER II.

“Thou art my bosom friend—  
My best beloved.—HERSEL.

Lorio Durazzo was the only son of the noble Marquis of that ancient name, who resided at the Villa Pietro, near Portici. An inseparable intimacy had subsisted between the two families from their infancy. Unlike the Marquis di Salvo, the noble Durazzo valued the happiness of his children too well, to sacrifice their peace of mind and inclinations, at the shrines of pride and riches. His advice was such as to convince them his admonitions proceeded from no other cause than a parent's anxiety for the future welfare of his children. It was the only daughter of this nobleman that the Marquis Di Salvo had fixed upon as a proper alliance for his son, with regard to family distinction. He, unlike the Marquis Durazzo, did not deem it necessary to consult his son's inclinations on the subject. Rigid pride being his most predominant passion, his word was law, and having once resolved upon the alliance himself, he expected, nay even commanded implicit obedience and

acquiescence in his wishes on the part of Rosano. Di Salvo esteemed and admired the all-accomplished Lady Janetta, but her beauty or accomplishments had not made any farther impressions on the heart of Di Salvo, than that of respectful admiration, as the beautiful and amiable sister of his friend. Lorio did not attempt to take any part, either on the one side or the other; he admired and esteemed his friend Rosano, for his many private virtues, and knowing what it was to love, himself, he did not expect from his friend that sacrifice of feeling and inclination on such a subject, as he well knew he could not make it himself. He was very differently situated to his friend. Di Salvo had fixed his affections on a lovely object, and their attachment was mutual; with regard to himself, he had not as yet declared his passion. His own heart and best affections were irrevocably fixed on the lovely and accomplished Rosalie di Scangaro, the bosom friend and companion of his sister Janetta. They had been educated together in the same convent, and had formed that sincere and lasting friendship for each other, that made them almost inseparable. Janetta was either visiting the Chateau di Palermo, or her friend Rosalie was at the Villa Pietro; and here it was that Lorio had seen and enjoyed the society of his lovely mistress, and cherished the passion which it would be equally as difficult and impossible for him to relinquish, as his friend Di Salvo to forsake his Amanda. Sympathy of feeling then united these friends more closely, and they had solemnly pledged their faith to advise and assist each other. Lorio Durazzo had fixed his affections on the beautiful



and accomplished Rosalie di Scangaro, who was born at Palermo, and was the only child of the illustrious and powerful Count of that ancient name. Fortune had done much for her, nature had done still more. From her infancy, her growing beauty, her grace, her sweetness of disposition, her sense, made her the idol of a father, who lived but to adore her. Having very early lost her mother, she was sent to the convent of St. Ursula, where under the kind indulgent care of the Lady Abbess, she had lived happily near four years, when the Lady Janetta Durazzo entered the same convent to complete her education. It was under the care and superintendence of the amiable Lady Florencia, that these lovely girls formed that friendship which was to continue with their lives, and their accomplishments and manners were such as did honour to their noble preceptress. Added to her kind instruction in the different branches of female education, the most able masters were engaged to unfold the talents which heaven had bestowed upon Rosalie; and at the age of seventeen she eclipsed all the Sicilian beauties. She understood and spoke the language of Racine, that of Cervantes, and even somewhat of that of Gesner; she made verses which she showed only to her father, but which would have delighted had they appeared in print. She sung the airs of Leo with a voice more affecting than the celebrated Faustina; and when she accompanied herself on the harp, the cardinals and prelates who heard her, and had the best taste in music, unanimously agreed that Rosalie could not be surpassed by the angels in heaven. Only one beautiful piece of her composition appeared;

it was set to music ; and often during the solitary hours she was doomed to pass alone, and when sadness oppressed her heart, she would sit and sing it with such feeling and pathos, that those who listened to her thought the sounds must proceed from some one more than human. The words were as follows :

### THE REVERIE.

In the gay morn of life, when no sorrows oppress'd,  
And youth's glowing passions reign'd over my breast,  
Oh! bright was the ideal picture I drew,  
It enchanted my soul with its richness of hue.

My mind, like a garden, luxuriantly smiled,  
There intelligence grew in exuberance wild ;  
Unknowing, unheeding, how useless the toil,  
With ardour I cultured the rich mental soil.

When wrapt in delusion did vainly presume,  
That the flowrets of fancy for ever would bloom,  
But o'er the bright prospect care's clouds closed around,  
And veil'd all my hopes in a darkness profound.

Joy yielded to anguish, and gloomy despair  
Assailed my sad bosom and fixed itself there.  
Now Fancy no longer roves over the bower,  
Embellished so gaily in youth's fleeting hour.

Its flowerets, once blooming, now wither'd, decline,  
And to view them with rapture no longer is mine,  
For the sun which once shot forth in brilliance its rays,  
Has set, and the magic's all vanished away.

To so many charms and accomplishments, Rosalie joined a fortune of a hundred thousand ducats a year, independant of her father, and it may easily be believed, that she was sought after by the first nobles of Sicily. The old Count de Scangaro, her father, was wise enough to know that high birth and a splendid alliance, are not always productive of lasting happiness. Therefore, with regard to marriage, he took especial care not to look merely to the titles and riches of those who aspired at, and had solicited the hand of his accomplished and lovely daughter. Among the many nobles who paid their suit at the Chateau, the young Duke of Castelamore was the most conspicuous. He waited upon the Count and solicited the hand of his daughter in marriage, and had urged his suit with all the energy and feeling a young and ardent mind could suggest. He did not receive any more encouragement from the count than others had met with who had waited upon him. He would not favour any one, although the Duke ranked first in his opinion; but confined himself to admitting them to the concerts, balls, and music parties which he often gave at his pavilion. This good parent leaving his daughter sole and unbiassed mistress of her choice, and the best able to judge, in his opinion, for herself, in a matter of such importance to her future happiness: her

welfare was most certainly the first and dearest wish of his heart. Rosalie, knowing this, and every day's experience proving his parental kindness and tender care, the judicious advice and admonitions he so feelingly gave were always received with gratitude, and treasured in mind by his affectionate and dutiful daughter.

Among so many admirers, Rosalie remained long undecided: naturally tender, lively, and impassioned, like a Sicilian—only eighteen years of age—her heart, which had already begun to speak, had not, as yet, positively declared itself in favour of any one. Her eyes, however, had oftener singled out the young Duke of Castelmore, as knowing him to be a favourite with her father; and, as he led her through the mazy dance, she was pleased and gratified with the polite and unwearied attention he paid her. His tall, graceful stature, handsome face and figure, with wit, valour, and a great name, and at the age of nineteen, gave the Duke an advantage over rivals much wiser and more amiable than him self. Deprived of his parents while he was yet in his cradle, the indulgent kindness of an aged relation, who had the care of his younger years, and the liberty he had so prematurely enjoyed, as he grew up to man's estate, might serve as an excuse and an apology for the many deviations of this impetuous and wayward youth. Besides, his faults were not known, and were artfully concealed from the Count di Scanzaro and his daughter, and the doating parent no sooner found that she gave him the preference, than he himself preferred him. He informed his daughter of the Duke's declaration, and bestowed on him a warm panegyric, and took

occasion, as he had always been accustomed to do, to give her such advice, and answer such questions as she put to him, in the way he perceived and felt would be most agreeable to her to follow. And he always concluded his admonitions by fervently praying that she might have prudence to judge rightly, and that the choice she made might prove the best for her future happiness. But the wisest often prove the most short sighted, and in this instance it was that the maxim was truly verified.

The Duke of Castelamore, then, was the fearful rival Lorio Durazzo had to contend with for the heart of the beautiful Rosalie, Di Scanzaro. Often did she visit the Villa Pietro, and hours of happiness had he spent in the society of his lovely mistress and his sister Janetta. He had not, as yet, declared the passion with which she had inspired him, although they had, for hours together, wandered among the enchanting vineyards and orange groves which surrounded the Villa. Still, the pleasures she seemed to enjoy in his society, made him fondly hope that the passion he felt for her was mutual. The Duke had many times been mentioned, but Lorio did not suspect he was a rival; his sister had given him every encouragement to hope.

Janetta was now on a visit at her friends', and they were daily expected to return together to Villa Pietro, for a short period; he then resolved to declare his passion to her, and know his doom from her lovely lips.

It was during their morning's ramble, that Lorio deposited the secret of his heart in the breast of Di Salvo, and the friends mutually wished each other success. The entertainments of the evening had no charms, either

for Di Salvo or his friend: the Marchioness di Salvo also appeared unusually thoughtful, and her son could not help remarking that her eyes were frequently fixed upon him, with a thoughtful and angry look, which she frequently averted when their glances met. The Marchioness's party breaking up at an early hour, Di Salvo and his friend retired to rest, feeling fatigued from their day's excursion.

On the following morning the Marchioness sent for Di Salvo into her closet. Her anger was less violent than that of the Marquis, although she made use of every epithet that could injure the fair character of Amanda and wound the feelings of her son. She tried every art to dissuade him, as she said, from his unfortunate attachment; but the more she upbraided, the more firmly were fixed his affections, and they parted unconvinced by each other's arguments. The interview with his mother had excited suspicions which before had never occurred: and the calmness of her tongue, when he expected such an excess of rage, served only to confirm his opinion, and conceal the darker purposes of her heart. She had firmly resolved, with the assistance of her agents, to separate Amanda from the reach of her son, and, if possible, prevent him ever seeing her more.

In the Dominican convent of San Spirito, at Naples, lived a Monk, named Raldino; an impenetrable and mysterious veil was spread over his family and connexions. An austere and gloomy pride marked his character, and the severe penances and solitary habits which he pursued and practised, were conceived by those who observed him to be the effect of a spirit pressed down



by misfortune, or some growing and excessive torture of a wounded and troubled conscience. In his manners he was reserved, distant, and fearfully sullen, and at certain times he would abscond for weeks, and hide himself—none knew whither, or for what purpose he absented himself. Notwithstanding he had been repeatedly watched, and every vigilance made use of to trace his steps, he had hitherto eluded every effort tried to find out the place of his concealment. The elder brothers of the convent said he had more genius than learning; that he loved sophisticated argument, and doubted the truth of every thing. He was generally disliked by the whole brotherhood, hated by his associates, and loved by no one. In his figure he was ungracefully tall and slender, and there was something direfully terrific in his air, as he walked along in the full black sable garment of his order. His cowl shaded a face which bore the harsh features and stamp of the darker passions: his large, glaring, and ferocious eye, and the livid paleness of his complexion, struck an observer with the penetration of the one, and the mortality of the other. This man was the confessor of the Marchioness di Salvo; with him she would hold consultations for hours, nay even for whole days—no wonder, then, that she became, in every sense of the word, “unamiable.”

With such an adviser, so frequently at her side, how could she hold imbibing his principles? weak-minded as she was, his word was law; she had only to make known to him her troubles and her wishes, and he would engage to find a cure for the one, and the accomplishment of the other. With this man she consulted with

regard to the intimacy subsisting between her son and Amanda Lusinette, and they laid their gloomy purposes together to effect a separation between them.

Di Salvo met the confessor as he left his mother's apartment. The monk looked at him with a holy meekness; but, in the passing benediction, the penetrating eye of Di Salvo thought he read a presentiment of his base hypocrisy, and of what the religious and gloomy monster was preparing for him. He almost felt convinced he was indebted to him for the rigid treatment and anger of his parents, and vowed to be revenged on his head, should he detect him as the author of his wrongs and misery.

Since his last visit to the Villa Altieri, Di Salvo felt no longer any reserve at going thither, and, after a few week's attendance, during which time he had spent many hours in the company of his lovely mistress, the happiest he considered of his life, Amanda yielded to the remonstrances of her aunt and lover, and rejecting her own delicate scruples, admitted Di Salvo as her acknowledged admirer.

One evening, as the latter sat with Amanda and Signora Marietta in the pavilion, where he had received the most flattering and decisive token of his lovely fair one's regard, he pleaded his suit with unusual earnestness, for a speedy consummation of his wishes—for an immediate marriage. He implored her to name an early day for their nuptials, as, when once that had taken place, and he had the happiness of calling her his own, he did not fear the wrath of his father, or the anger of his mother. Her aunt seconded his entreaties, from a convic-

tion that her life was ebbing fast, and the desire she had of seeing that event take place, and knowing her to be under the honourable protection of a kind husband, before death should summon her from this world. Amanda burst into a flood of tears at the declaration, while Di Salvo and Signora Marietta urged their wishes the more strenuously.

"I feel," said the old lady, "I am not to remain long an inhabitant of this earth—that my end is fast approaching. Though the separation is keen, where affection has been cemented like Amanda's and mine, I shall feel the parting less if I am permitted to see you happily settled—to see you under the safe protection of a kind and affectionate husband. I will bequeath to you, Signor Di Salvo, the legacy of my child; she will not deny me in the last request I shall ever make to her on the subject; she will not, could not, bear to see me die unhappy!"

As the old lady, in broken accents, uttered these last words, she gave the hand of Amanda to Di Salvo, who, falling on his knees, received it with rapture; and with eyes upraised, and feelings of the most indescribable transport, he vowed in the most solemn manner to make her future happiness his study and delight; and that henceforward he should consider and defend her as his wife, although the hallowed rites had not, as yet, been solemnised. Amanda threw herself into his arms, and acknowledged him as her future husband, and, amidst a shower of affectionate tears, consented that the nuptials should take place on an early day, but deferred fixing the time until he returned to the Villa Altieri the

following evening. Di Salvo, at a late hour, took his leave of his affianced bride and the good old Lady Marietta, who appeared unusually thoughtful and depressed when he took his leave for the night. With a heart light as air he arrived at Naples, and found, on entering the palace, that his father had given orders for his son to attend him on the following morning in his cabinet.

Di Salvo passed the night calmly, the most pleasing dreams of future happiness flitted across his sleeping fancy, and he awoke with the hope of being enabled to realize them. As the hour was early and the weather inviting, he took a walk previous to his attendance on his father. The freshness of the air, the beauty of the surrounding scene, added to which, the ecstacy of his feelings, filled his mind with a strong degree of energy, and his spirits mounted to their accustomed vigour; therefore, on his return home, he received the summons to attend the Marquis calmly; and knowing the subject on which he required his attendance, he reluctantly obeyed, but firmly resolved to resist to the uttermost any angry threatenings or rigid commands he might impose upon him. He therefore entered the room with a firm step.

"I understand," said his father, raising his vindictive eyes from a letter which he was perusing when his son entered, "that you still persevere and continue your visits to the unhappy young woman who was the subject of our former conversation—"

"Unhappy!" exclaimed Di Salvo, "I do assure you that neither Amanda or myself are unhappy—quite the contrary; I am most devotedly attached to her, and will for ever remain so."

The Marquis then, in a tumult of rage, informed his son that his opposition arose from the most correct and convincing proofs of her baseness.

Di Salvo, in the heat of the moment, forgetting all respect for his father, whom in reality he loved and respected, and whom he would not willingly have disobeyed on any other subject but the one which now engrossed all his heart, gave way to the feelings which agitated and filled his mind with the utmost indignation. Then seizing his sword, he vowed in the most solemn manner, before his angry parent, not to rest or know peace until he had discovered the wretch who was the cause of his present unhappiness, and the persecution of such innocence as his Amanda's; and as he could not obtain from the Marquis the smallest sentence that could lead him to suspect who was the author of such vile calumny, the conversation terminated in the most unfriendly manner, by his abruptly leaving the room.

Di Salvo immediately ordered his horse, and mounting, he hastened to Villa Pietro, to seek his friend Lorio, in whose society he hoped to find that comfort and advice his wounded and oppressed heart stood so much in need of. He found him at home, just going to take a ride with the Lady Rosalie and his sister, who had arrived at the Villa the preceding day. There was a melancholy sadness depicted in the countenance of Lorio, as he received his friend, who, after taking a little rest and refreshment, joined them in their short excursion. When they returned home, Lorio and Di Salvo took a ramble in the gardens together, that they might unbosom each other's griefs. Di Salvo named the interview he had

just had with his father; also that he suspected the Marchioness and her confessor to be the authors of the calumny that had been circulated to Amanda's disadvantage. Lorio agreed with him in his suspicions, and promised to interrogate the Marchioness.

Lorio informed his friend Di Salvo, that his sister gave him no hopes now of ever possessing the fair Rosalie, for that the young Duke of Castelamore had declared his passion for her friend, and had been accepted. That the most splendid preparations were making for the immediate solemnization of the nuptials; that she had only accompanied Janetta for a few days, in order to make arrangements for her return to be one of the bridesmaids on the occasion. Janetta, he said, did not like the Duke; nor did she believe her friend would find that real happiness she anticipated on her marriage with him; but the day was fixed, and Lorio was almost driven to madness. The friends, after commenting upon the pangs of hopeless love, and giving and receiving that mutual advice and consolation each stood so much in need of, returned to the Villa to dine, and were met by the ladies. As Di Salvo gazed at the Lady Rosalie, he was not surprised at Lorio's feelings on hearing that she had fixed her heart's best affections on the Duke, especially as it seemed likely to be an union of misery rather than happiness. The figure of Rosalie was light and elegant, of a moderate height, beautiful dark chestnut hair shaded her lovely forehead, adding a darker tinge to her eyes; the roses of health glowed on her cheeks, and the smile of good humour played round her mouth; her heart seemed warm and affectionate, and susceptible of the



finer feelings, and Di Salvo felt assured, that to have possessed the heart and affections of such a lovely woman would have constituted the height of his friend Lorio's happiness—but cruel Fate seemed to have ordained it otherwise.

The repast being ended, the friends retired to make arrangements for their departure—Di Salvo to return home, and Lorio to travel for a short period, to regain his wonted spirits and composure of mind.



## CHAPTER IV.

"No, though to veil my thoughts of gloom,  
I seem to twine joy's rosy wreath,  
'Twas but as flowerets o'er a tomb,  
Which only hide the woe beneath.

"I lose no portion of my woes,  
Although my tears in secret flow;  
More green and fresh the verdure grows  
Where the cold streams run hid below."

J. S.

After the ladies returned to Sicily, the marriage of the Duke of Castelmore with the all-accomplished Ro-

salie di Seangaro was soon solemnized. The good old Count, her father, celebrated the nuptials with the most brilliant and magnificent entertainments. The young Duchess was introduced at the court of the Viceroy, of which she became the fairest ornament. Nothing was talked of but her charms, and the Duke was universally envied. The blissful Rosalie gave herself up to the pleasures of every kind around her, and which employed and varied all her moments. Young, beautiful, rich, adored, she saw before her a long career of felicity; her husband seemed to live but to love her, and her old father, transported with joy, loudly returned thanks to heaven for the seeming happiness of his child. He embraced his son-in-law, gazed on his daughter, and congratulated himself on the certainty of his quitting existence before any event could occur to disturb the happiness he felt. But in six months after, that happiness no longer existed: the Duke, naturally fickle and fond of change, and led astray by his former dangerous companions—the corruptors of his youth—once more gave himself up to those lamentable pleasures, which he had only quitted for a time, but not renounced. He forsook his lovely and amiable wife for the sake of worthless and abandoned rivals. At first he carefully concealed the outrages which he offered to love, but, soon throwing off the mask and all restraint, he lavished his treasures on the vile objects of his transient flames; he, himself, made public his excesses, and seemed to be vain of the trouble he took to procure his own degradation. The unfortunate Rosalie had no need of information from those officious persons who take a delight in informing and lacerating

the hearts of deserted wives. She loved the Duke, and perceived the change as soon as he himself did. Repressing her tears in silence, and hiding her grief from every eye, she was particularly solicitous to conceal it from her father, and to spare the tender old man a sorrow which would have sunk him to the tomb. Feigning before him that she was happy, and smiling when the tears were almost stifling her, she framed excuses for the frequent absences of the Duke, whenever the Count complained of them, assigning motives for them ; and invented pretexts to account for her own profound solitude, and for the state of her health, which was every day declining.

This good parent did not entirely give her credit, or believe the excuses she framed ; but, pretending to think what she said was correct, he hid from her his alarms, his disquietude ; and both of them fearing to disclose what passed in their minds, were induced by the delicacy of their feelings to deceive each other.

Since the lady Janetta's return home, Rosalie had but one other friend to whom she confided her secret griefs. This faithful friend was her confidential domestic. Lauretta, better informed of the libertinism and profligacy of the Duke than her mistress, and despairing ever to see him return again to his faithful wife (what he ought to be), had often endeavoured to extinguish, or at least, to weaken the fondness of the Duchess for him. She had exhorted her to live, at least for herself, her father, for her little ones, for friendship. Rosalie could not follow this judicious advice. The want which she felt of loving and being loved ; the delicious pleasure of

being enabled to reconcile her duty and her inclination ; involuntary gratitude which an innocent young female feels towards the man who first taught her to love, all conspired to inflame the heart of Rosalie—all rendered dear to her heart a guilty husband. She now began to attribute to herself the cause of her misfortune ; she reproached herself with having believed that always to love would be sufficient to make her sure of being beloved ; she likewise blamed herself with having, since her marriage, neglected those talents of which she was little vain, but which seduce and captivate, and often retain more strongly than constantly, the lover whose pride they gratify. Rosalie now dressed more elegantly ; she found the secret of appearing more lovely ; she returned to her harp, which had lain by so long neglected ; she sang her most pathetic airs, and drew tears from the eyes of her father, by singing the beautiful verses of Tasso, in which Rinaldi is recalled by his faithful Armida.

Her efforts were fruitless ; her sweetness of temper, her patience, her tender attentions, had no effect upon her husband : yielding himself up to the most shameful profligacy, passing the days and nights far from home, far from the Duchess, scarcely did he see her for a few moments—scarcely did he hear from others to what a height of perfection she had brought those enchanting talents which she cultivated for him alone. At length, driven to despair, she prayed for death ; and Lauretta began to fear that grief would indeed put an end to existence ! One day she thus addressed her—

“ My dear mistress,” said she, since it is not in your power to cure yourself of a fatal passion, which is sinking

you to the grave ; since, to bring back an ingrate, you have exhausted the strongest and the tenderest means that love and virtue can employ, other plans must be resorted to, rather than you shall be suffered to perish. I know an old sorceress who has lived at Palermo for these many years, and who is celebrated for her magical skill, and particularly for the love potions which she makes. Our pretended free-thinkers make game of the wonders which she performs, and refuse to put any faith in them ; but, for my part, thank heaven ! I believe every thing, and I cannot doubt what I have seen with my own eyes.

“ You remember, dear lady, the young Nanetta who came last winter to show you some gauzes, and in whom you seemed to take such an interest. She was no less prudent than handsome. She resided with my own sister, who has a thousand times told me that she was an ensample to all the neighbourhood. Well, a young nobleman saw her at church, and had the boldness to talk to her of love ; Nanetta would not listen to him ; he wrote to her, but she sent back all his letters unopened, and avoided all she possibly could coming in his way. The rejected lover hastened to beg the assistance of the old sorceress, informed her of his attachment, and made her large presents. The sorceress gave him a small green taper, which she told him to light whenever he was desirous of seeing the object of his affections. Whether he lighted the candle that very night I cannot say ; but I know that since that time Nanetta goes every night alone to her lover, and does not return till break of day. My sister, having ascertained this fact, was

beginning to reproach her, but the poor Nanetta disarmed her displeasure, by telling her that as soon as she is asleep, she gets up, dresses herself by some supernatural power, quits the house without wishing to do so, and, in spite of herself, seeks the young nobleman, for whom she has not the least affection."

"There is," says she, "a green taper which burns all night, without going out all night or being consumed, and which, as soon as the day-light appears, is extinguished with a great noise which awakens me. Then I seem to recover my reason, I seem to wake as from a terrible dream, and I return to my home, sad, and bathed in tears."

"By this information, my dear mistress, which is but too true, you may form an idea how powerful are the enchantments of this sorceress. Why not consult her? let me beg and entreat you to do so; if you do not wish to be known, dress in my clothes; and if you are afraid of going to her, I will undertake to bring her here." The Duchess heard Lauretta with a melancholy smile: she rejected her offer, unwilling to apply to a remedy which her reason and best understanding represented to her as being completely ridiculous. But understanding and reason have no great influence when we love, and nothing appears foolish which seems likely to assist in rendering us attractive.

Rosalie meditated upon the sorceress; her imagination, naturally ardent, was still more inflamed by all-powerful love. Credulous, because she was tender, she paid to the customs of her country that tribute of superstition which every Sicilian owes to them. She was now utterly

hopeless, and Laurretta every day related to her some new miracles which had been performed by the old sorceress. Rosalie at length made up her mind, after much persuasion, and gave Laurretta permission to go in search of the old sorceress.

We must now return to Di Salvo, who, on the following morning, after he had parted with his friend Lorio, again prepared to visit the Villa Altieri, and hoped to learn that Signora Marietta had fixed the nuptial day. He had reached the entrance into the well-known archway—when, on passing up the shady path-way, the mysterious voice of the stranger arrested his steps. It was the same he had heard on a former evening, and as the figure passed before him, through the gloom of the path-way, it said in a solemn voice,—

“Go not a step farther, for death is at Altieri!”

The figure then instantly disappeared, before he could recover from the consternation into which his words had plunged him. Di Salvo pursued the figure, as soon as he could recover himself, into the thickest gloom, but no answer was returned to his repeated questions and intreaties, nor could he trace the smallest clue to the path the monk had taken. The only death that struck his imagination was that of Amanda; it occurred to him that she had been murdered; he saw her in the agonies of resistance, calling upon him to shield her from the arm of the assassin. He flew as fast as his trembling limbs would bear him, and, oppressed with the horrible apprehension, it was some minutes before he could open a private gate of the garden, of which he had received the key. The house appeared deserted—he listened



and heard the sound of that recitative which is performed as the requiem of the departed or dying. After repeatedly knocking at the portal, the old house-keeper appeared.

“Alas! Alas! she is dead, quite dead! gone for ever!” exclaimed the ancient domestic; “well yesterday, and fled to heaven to-day!”

“Is she indeed dead?” exclaimed Di Salvo, staggering to a pillar in the hall—“where! where? how did she die! who killed her!—tell me all, lead me to her apartment—refuse me—and I will force myself there!”

Annetta, alarmed at his disordered looks and manner, conducted him to the chamber; when on approaching the bed of death, he beheld his beloved Amanda—weeping over the sad remains of her departed aunt.

It is needless to say that joy was mingled with sorrow, or that he employed every soothing consideration to alleviate the grief of the lovely mourner. From some private conversation with Annetta, he learned that Signora Marietta’s death was sudden and appalling; she was seized with a kind of a convulsive attack in the evening, just before the time of retiring for the night, and expired before any assistance could be procured. Had Di Salvo visited Altieri in the morning, as he proposed, he would have been there at the time she was attacked. From her appearance after the awful event had taken place, there was every cause to suspect that she had been poisoned. Di Salvo hastily demanded if any one had been at the Villa Altieri lately, or had the deceased taken any food that was likely to cause her death. He was answered—not that they knew of. Annetta said

to him, no one had been there but Signor Castello, yourself, a cousin of my lady, of the Convent, near you rocks, who comes for the fish and different work my young lady employers. It is nearly three weeks ago that she was here, since which, indeed we have had the Gardener and several other persons with provisions.

"Three weeks! strange indeed!" said Di Salvo, musing; but you must be silent on this occasion, and contrive to let me inspect the deceased countenance when Amanda is not present."

Annetta asked him if he thought her mistress had not died a natural death.

"Peace! you must, I tell you, be silent," said Di Salvo, "or we shall not be able to make the discovery. I will see to it: in the mean time take care of Amanda, and conjure her, Annetta, to keep up her spirits till I see her again."

He then quitted the Villa, meditating on all that had transpired during that eventful day, and for the first time he resolved the mysterious figure, and the warnings he had received from him, into the person and voice of the Confessor Raddino: yet, if it was him, he had so disguised the tones of his voice, that they were not exactly the same. Still, if they were not the same, the one might be an agent of the other; for the prophecy of death at Altiero, implied a chain of cause and effect. Fired with this belief, he determined to discover the truth—to meet the slanderer of Amanda, and compel the confessor or his agent, to reveal the mystery of such conduct. The circumstances relating to Signora

Marietta's death, perpetually recurred to his mind. Wholly at a loss to account for the motive of poisoning one so very harmless as the old lady, unless it was to get her out of the way, that they might the more securely prevent his visiting at Altiero. Lost in suspicions and conjecture, he resolved as soon as the funeral was over, to intreat Amanda to consent to their union immediately; and then he would place her somewhere in security from the reach of her enemies, until the wrath of his father had subsided.

He had appointed a physician to meet him in the evening at the Villa, and had told Annetta that he should be there about the hour of midnight, after all was quiet, and Amanda had retired to rest, for he was determined to have the best medical advice in ascertaining, if possible, the real cause of Marietta's sudden death. Before the visit, however, he felt a wish to see the Marchioness, and ask her some questions relative to Raddino. On his entering her apartment, he found the Monk with her. They were so deeply engaged in conversation, that Di Salvo for a few moments had time to contemplate the features of the Confessor. Raddino, on observing him, paused—and saluted him as he advanced into the room, with a contemptuous firmness; while the Marchioness received him with a frown, which immediately relaxed into a smile; the smile, however sudden, was not lost upon her son, and was more unpleasant than the frown, because it indicated to him there was treachery accompanying it.

The lady, after having a general conversation in

occupied in determining the identity of the stranger, with the Monk before him. The result was, that he still remained undecided in his opinion; yet he felt convinced there was some secret work on foot, from the manner of his mother, who now rather abruptly left the room. Recollecting, however, and feeling convinced that the stranger's monkish habit, and that of Raldino seemed of the same order, he determined to obtain by questions, the knowledge which his visual investigation denied him. For this purpose he noticed some drawings of different ruins and desolated fortifications, and castles, which ornamented the Marchioness's apartment. He then alluded to the fortress of Paluzzi, and named the deep arch-way, under which, overshadowed by towering trees and ponderous fortifications, he observed, required nothing else to finish the gloomy picture, but the addition of lawless banditti, waiting for the unsuspecting travelers; or the long black garb of a Friar, lurking about the ruins.

The Confessor felt the personality of the last remark, and said he could not help lamenting that banditti and monks were coupled together.

"To be brief," said Di Salvo, "I have observed a Monk stalk about there at night, in stature, manner, and habit, not unlike yourself; and if I again encounter him, I will tell him such truths that shall make him tremble."

"Indeed," said the Confessor, smiling rather ironically; "there are many brethren who much resemble each other; but the brothers of the Sable Crucifix, clothed in a sackloth, the peculiar symbol of their

order, could not, methinks, have escaped your correct observation. It could not, therefore, be one of them whom you have seen."

A slight confusion which now appeared in the features of Raldino, occasioned by the penetrating glance of Di Salvo, as the Monk uttered the last part of his speech, induced Rosano to regard him more sternly; and he replied—

"It may not be one of their order, but I think it is now but too plainly perceptible and *certain*, to whom I may attribute the cause of all my injuries and unhappiness. It is the secret adviser, the informer who steals into the bosom of a family, to ruin its peace and repose. The base and vile calumniator of the purest innocence stands revealed in the same person."

"By this pointed manner," said Raldino, "I am led to suppose that you suspect, nay even mean to brand me with those ignominious titles; but if you apply them only to the author of your injuries, they wound not me; I am satisfied that he should feel your resentment."

The cheerful, malicious smile, the seeming complacency which accompanied this affectation of innocence, rushed into the heart of Di Salvo—he paused, and eyed the father. Then recollecting that perhaps he had gone too far, that as he had no proof, he had perhaps said too much; he attempted an excuse for his indecorous conduct to a man of his age, and seeming sacred character. The Marchioness now re-entered the room, and Di Salvo had just done apologizing for his disrespectful and sudden attack, when she advanced, and beheld the agitation that hung upon his brow. She immediately questioned

him on the cause of his emotion ; but her son telling her he would leave his faults to the honour and clemency of the holy father, quitted the room.

The artful Monk then detailed the affront he had just received, without the smallest palliation ; and as the Marchioness's anger rose, he meekly spoke of the rashness and intemperance of headstrong and impetuous youth. He then began his cunning and artful advice, as to the best means of saving the young man from utter ruin, and, as he called it, unavailing repentance ; as also the disgrace he was bringing on his noble family. Their conference ended by a resolution to adopt such means as he should advise, and which would prove more effectual than remonstrances, in their opinion.

The Confessor now took his leave, to arrange plans for the accomplishment of their diabolical purposes ; leaving the Marchioness to brood alone on the base designs they had been forming. When the evening was far advanced, Di Salvo took his way towards the Villa Abate ; he met the physician, who appointed, and they approached the corps, which was laid out. As the light glared on the cadaverous visage, he could scarcely recognize it for the same placid countenance, which, but a few hours before, had with such a benignant smile of satisfaction, committed the care and happiness of her niece to his protection. He felt greatly afflicted, and as he looked at the black hats that overclouded the face of the deceased, and then regarded that of the physician, who stood gazing at her with a gloomy thought, and a cold unfeeling eye, he was reminded of the words of the

"If you think the deceased poisoned," said the physician, after a long pause, "we dissent. Although appearances and circumstances seem unfavourable, yet it would be hazarding much to coincide in your opinion, where many other causes might have operated to produce a similar effect."

Di Salvo was obliged to acquiesce, though he did not believe her death was natural; therefore enquired no farther. Then taking a last look at the deceased, they left the room. The physician departed immediately. After a short conversation with Annetta, who informed him that Amanda had retired early, quite ill, and overcome with grief for the loss her aunt, Di Salvo, promising to be at the Villa again very soon, departed.

On his arrival at home, he was admitted by a confidential servant, and retired immediately to rest.

Amanda lost the recreation of her former situation, in the grief she felt, and which overwhelmed her heart for the loss of her beloved relative, who was to be interred in the chapel of the convent of *Santa Maria dell Martino*, on the following evening, after Di Salvo and the physician had been there.

After the funeral rites were concluded, the lady abbess mingled her consolations with entreaties, that Amanda would leave the Villa Aliere for a time, and make the convent her home. She thanked the Lady Abbess, and with feelings of gratitude, accepted her kind offer for the present, as being congenial to her wishes and inclination; and before she left, it was agreed that she should be received as a boarder immediately.

Her chief motive in returning to Aliere, was to meet



Di Salvo, whom she now considered as her future protector, her husband, and the representative of her departed aunt. Their interview was most affecting; and e'er they departed it was agreed that he should visit her in the parlour of the convent, which the Lady Abbess had consented to. Amanda also consented that when decorum should no longer prevent it, she would yield her promised hand to him.



## CHAPTER V.

Approach me as ye are,  
Or one—or all—in your accustomed forms.

On the evening previous to Amanda's departure for the convent Santa Maria del Martino, Di Salvo went at an early hour to bid her adieu for a short time. During their interview, a thousand evil forebodings and conjectures assailed him.

"My dearest Amanda," said he, "these growing fears quite unman me; they seem to threaten me with an eternal separation. Let me intreat you to consent to our

immediate union; to making me the most envied—the happiest of mankind. Oh! my love, if you go to the convent La Martino, let it be only to visit its altar.

She reproached him gently for his want of fortitude on the occasion, for the idleness of his fears, and remarked, that such a parting seemed rather an everlasting farewell, than that of a separation only for a few days. At length he tore himself from her, and with many tender adieus, they parted.

Di Salvo left Villa Altiere and his lovely Amanda, with a foreboding and heavy heart. On his return home, he wished he had seen her safe at the convent. At one time he thought of returning to escort her safely there; but the idea was checked as soon as formed, fearing she would again blame him for his groundless fears.

To divert his mind from dwelling too much upon the thoughts which oppressed him, he resolved to make arrangements for visiting the old ruined fortress of Paluzzi again. The deep impressions made by the different visitations of the Monk, if such it were; the suddenness with which he always disappeared, and the solemn event verified in his last warning, determined Di Salvo to walk once more to the fearful regions of shadows and darkness; and carrying torches into its inmost recesses, fathom the mystery of that mysterious place.

His friend Lozaro having declined any farther adventure, he determined to take his own servant, Bardo, with him. He was a courageous, humorous, faithful fellow, and he felt more confidence in his company on the occasion, than any one he could think of.

As the shades of evening approached, they set out on their excursion. It had just struck the hour of midnight by the chime of the convent of the Sable Crucifix, as they came in sight of the ruins. They hurried forward, and entered the arch-way by the light of torches. These they concealed in one of the hollow cliffs, that they might watch more securely in darkness, for a short period. To amuse and pass the time, Bardo began to relate a tale relative to the convent del Pianto, when a rustling sound passed him, and the voice of the Monk was recognized in these words:—

“The time is past—you are too late! she departed an hour ago! beware of your footsteps!”

Di Salvo sprung suddenly forward to reach the figure, while Bardo fired his pistol, and ran for a torch. In a moment he returned with it, and exclaimed—

“Signor, I saw the skirt of his garment, as he ascended those steps in the rock.”

They now rushed to the top of the fortification, Di Salvo holding the torch to examine the place; when Bardo thought he saw a shadowy figure traverse the dusky arches beyond the Citadel. They arrived at the door where Lozaro had before seen his friend come from. And here Di Salvo hesitated.

“Through this door, said Bardo, I saw it just now pass.”

Di Salvo, drawing his sword, resigned the torch to his servant, and they proceeded forward, through a long passage, which ended in a staircase, leading to the vaults below. Di Salvo remembering what he had before seen there, faltered for a moment in his purpose. At

length they proceeded, and as they traversed one of the passages below, Bardo pointed his attention to a tall figure standing in the distant gloom, at the extremity of the avenue, near the stair case. They rushed forward, but when they reached the place, the figure was gone, and nothing responded to his voice, but the lengthened echoes of the subterraneous chambers. Bardo descending a few of the next flight of steps, again called out—

“There it is, Signor; it now flits before us; thence it is gone through that door, that opens into one of the vaults.”

They pursued, and entered the spacious chamber, where he had formerly descended into. The creaking of a heavy hinge, on which a door in the wall very slowly opened and closed again, excited their observation, and Di Salvo sprung towards it. It was unfastened, and as he entered, he bid Bardo keep watch at the entrance. Di Salvo then entered the second apartment, and Bardo followed him; there was no aperture for escape; and the casement near the roof was strongly grated. Yet, nothing appeared to excite their attention.

“If this spirit, or whatever it may be,” said Bardo, “will not have an interview with us, pray let us e’en quit it, and leave this dismal place.”

Scarcely had he spoken these words, when the door closed upon them with a most tremendous crash, which thundered through the vaults. For a few moments they stood silently gazing on each other, every instant expecting to see it open again, and that the figure would appear. But the sounds died away, and all became quiet as the tomb. They then hastened to unfasten the door,

but their efforts were ineffectual. They were now horror struck, and each coincided in the opinion, that they had been decoyed there for some bad purpose. Di Salvo now took the torch, and examined the walls, but could find no outlet. In one corner of the vault lay an object that dreadfully alarmed them for their own fate. With horror they viewed a garment stained nearly all over with blood.

“It moves!” cried Bardo.

On inspection, however, it appeared to conceal only the other remains of a dress, stained also, as well as the floor, with clotted gore. On a closer examination, Di Salvo with the point of his sword, lifted up some black drapery, part of the habiliments of a monk; the vest and scapulary of which were rent and crimsoned with the sanguine fluid. He started at the discovery, as if he had identified the apparition which had so often tempted his credulity. Bardo declared he had no doubt this garment once belonged to the spirit they had just seen.

“If so,” said Di Salvo, “he will come again, I hope, to release us from this noisome place.”

After waiting a short time in silence, Bardo and his master loudly vociferated for help through the window, and again they attempted to unfasten the door, but all in vain; for its strength resisted their united efforts to open it. They then sat down on the ground, oppressed with an agony of thought, and wishing they had not entered that dismal and terrific chamber.

Bardo, seeing Di Salvo so much oppressed, even forgot for a while his own anxiety, in feeling for that of his master: and endeavoured, as far as he was able, to perform the office of a comforter.

In mentioning the convent dell Pianto, it seemed to remind him strongly of his Amanda; and he sincerely hoped she was safe at the convent della Martino. Yet the words of the Monk as they entered the fortress, seemed connected with her fate, and he gave himself up to all the agony of suspicions and anxiety, to know what could be the meaning of the mysterious words he had heard. "The time is past; you are too late! she died an hour ago;" he repeated to himself; who departed an hour ago? The various ideas which rushed across his mind in quick succession; the forebodings which oppressed his heart on taking his leave of Amanda, all conspired to fill his mind with the most fearful anxiety respecting her. To divest his thoughts for a short period, therefore, he seated himself by the side of Bardo, and desired him to finish relating the story, which he had commenced under the arch-way, as they entered the fortress. It ran as follows:

Just after the vesper bell had tolled on the vigil of San Angelo; a person so muffled up as to be wholly unknown, placed himself on the steps of one of the boxes near the confessional chair, which from the gloom of the aisle, relieved only by a feeble lamp, is as darksome as this dungeon, Signor: the stranger's groans resounded through the wing, and were poured into the ear of Father Anselmo, the grand penitentiary of the order of the black crucifix, the Santa del Pianto. The father bade the penitent be more calm, and take comfort; but as the Confessor proceeded, he stood in the greatest need of the same comfort himself; for he quitted the chair in haste, and before he could reach the cloisters, he felt

into strong convulsions. On recovering himself, he immediately gave orders that the penitent should be detained if he were still in the church. He described him as a tall gigantic figure, habited in the dress of a white friar. After the father Anselmo had left the church, such a figure as he described, had been seen gliding swiftly towards the door of the convent. The orders were immediately attended to; but the porter on being interrogated, declared that no person in a long white habit had either entered, or gone through the gate that day. Upon receiving this information, the fathers instantly maintained that he must be within the walls; but their search proved like ours, Signor, it was all to no purpose.

"This must certainly be the Monk," exclaimed Di Salvo; "the same impenetrable mystery attends each."

A dying feeble groan now interrupted his proceeding. Bardo heard it, but imagining it was the wind, which now hollowed loudly through the vaults, he continued.

From the period of this strange confession, the father Anselmo has never rightly recovered. Hence some have supposed that the confession of the strange and mysterious penitent related to himself. But several remarkable circumstances contradicted this opinion; one was this:

About a month after this singular event, when one evening, after the monks had retired—

Here the murmuring of voices interrupted Bardo in his narration. They sprung up and listened attentively. The whispering returned at intervals, but from whence it proceeded they could not tell. At one time it seemed very near to the door, at another near the grating, and



then all was silent. Bardo at length urging that it would be better to trust to the consequences of a discovery, than run the risk of being starved to death by silence, Di Salvo and he loudly hallooed for assistance, but no answer was returned, and the sounds they had heard, died wholly away. Again they tried their united strength to open the door, but their efforts were ineffectual as before. Therefore abandoning every hope until morning light, and feeling quite weary and exhausted, they laid themselves down on the floor, and fell into a sound sleep.

While they take their rest, we will make some enquiry concerning the fate of Amanda.

After she had taken leave of Di Salvo, she retired to rest, but not to sleep. When she thought of Di Salvo, she regretted that, as it had pleased heaven to remove her dear aunt from her, that the forms of decorum should impose the propriety of waiting a certain period ere she should place herself under the care of his honorable and able protection. But the voice of prudence hushed every murmur, and she endeavoured to calm her feelings, and seek a short repose until the morning dawned. At an early hour she arose, and busily employed herself the whole day in making the necessary preparations to leave the Villa for the Convent la Martino, on the following morning.

As the evening approached, she took her lute and wandered through the gardens; at length having reached the pavilion, she entered and sat down to muse for a short period on Di Salvo and past happiness.

“Alas!” she mournfully exclaimed, “and must I leave

these beloved scenes among which my happy hours of childhood, and even up to this said hour, have been spent?" Every object was by long use rendered familiar, and dear, and she could not avoid feeling some portion of keen regret, at thus being obliged to leave these haunts—so beloved—so sacred.

The bird of evening trilled its little plaintive notes, and as Amanda listened to them, she took up her lute, and sung with the most enchanting, pathetic voice, the following beautiful lines.

### FAREWELL!

Though we are doomed to say farewell,  
And though we part in pain,  
Yet on these words I fondly dwell—  
We part to meet again.

Though for the present joy is fled,  
And woe and grief remain;  
Hope whispers through the gloomy shade—  
We part to meet again.

Why should we sigh for pleasure past,  
And why should we complain?  
As though that pleasure was our last—  
We part to meet again.

When thou, my love, art far away,  
All murmurings are vain;

Doth not some gentle spirit say—  
We part to meet again?

Thus hope a sweet relief affords,  
And mem'ry will retain  
Thy farewell—and thy sweetest words—  
We part to meet again.

She arose from her seat, and wiping away the tear that would force itself from her cheeks, she trembling exclaimed—

“Oh yes, we only part to meet again,” and then rushed from the pavilion. She wandered pensively through the orangery, and at the end of the long path which leads to the entrance hall, she was met by Annetta, who, alarmed at her long absence, had come in search of her.

“My dear young lady,” said she, “I began to think you would never return; I am quite overjoyed to see you safe, for strange fears have haunted me for the last hour about you. Do you know it is past the hour of midnight? let me beg of you to hasten, for even now my fears almost overcome me.”

Amanda was just going to chide her good old servant, for what she considered groundless alarm, when Annetta suddenly seized her arm, and pointing down one of the side paths, they saw two tall figures coming towards them. They ran towards the Villa, but the screams and fright of Annetta, who could not move very fast, quite impeded the flight of Amanda, who would not

forsake her old faithful domestic. They were quickly pursued by four ruffians in masks, and overtaken; two of whom rudely seizing Amanda, bore her off from the sight of her faithful Annetta, whose piteous cries and entreaties to the villains to release and spare her dear lady, rung through the gardens. The other two seized Annetta, when one of them holding his stilets to her throat, swore, if she was not silent, he would put an end to her noise. Fear soon overcame her, and they dragged her through the gardens in silence. At length they came to the foot of some high rocks, by the side of the bay, and following a winding path among the rocks, they came to a cabin which had apparently been just left by a party, for there was the remains of a repast they had been partaking of. In one corner, near a few dying embers, sat a dark looking figure, who, as they entered, muttered something to himself. The ruffians who had tied Annetta's hands, now called the man by his name, Rodonal, who coming forward, he gave her into his charge, saying—

“Remember, keep a strict watch over her till you see me again.”

“Beni,” gruffly uttered Rodonal, as he led the terrified and almost senseless Annetta into an inner room of the cabin, which was feebly lighted by a lamp suspended from the roof.

In one corner of this dismal damp place, was a straw mattress, on which the affrighted Annetta threw herself, and gave way to all the sorrow and anguish which her distressing situation naturally occasioned.

As the ruffians rudely bore Amanda through the oran

gery, her senses quite forsook her. In this pitiable situation they conveyed her to a carriage they had in waiting, and ordered the postilion to drive off with great speed. When she came to her senses, she found herself in the grasp of the same men she believed; the carriage moving with the greatest rapidity, and which continued its progress during the night, stopping but once to change horses. The heat was excessive, and as the morning advanced, the blinds and windows were let down a little way to admit the air. About noon they stopped at a post house and received some refreshment without alighting; after which they again set forward with the greatest velocity. Amanda shuddered at the idea of being seated between two such hardened, gruff-looking companions; and shrunk back in the carriage whenever they gazed at her, which they often did in rude silence.

Oppressed with the heat and suffocation of being shut up so long, Amanda requested the windows and blinds might be thrown open; which request being complied with, she for the first time had a view of the mountainous and rude country through which she was travelling, and which seemed to have bestowed all its softer and more nutritious productions on the richer plains below. Towards twilight they entered a long narrow defile, crossing which, a river descended from the rocky falls, and stayed their progress. The road then wound upwards among the cliffs, and became pendant over the waters below; presenting a most terrific and fearful view to the alarmed traveller.

After pursuing the windings of this narrow, dangerous road for some distance, it finally conducted to a narrow

bridge, thrown across the deep chasm of two stupendous cliffs, defended only by a rail, and towering among the clouds. Amanda, in passing this dangerous road, forgot for a short interval, her misfortunes, in the fears that she felt at viewing the awful precipices beneath. As they now descended this stupendous rugged path, and arrived in safety at a more even road, she felt pleasure and gratitude for the escape from such eminent dangers, and enjoyed the approaching prospect on the opposite side. The scenery here was wild and grand, and delightfully contrasted with the ruggedness of that they had just past. As they now gradually descended the gentle declivity, she perceived at no considerable distance, situated among the wild foliage on an opposite mountain, the spires and terrace of some church and convent. She inquired what building it was, and was answered by one of her guards, it was the monastery of Santa della Floriano, the place where her journey would shortly terminate. She felt gratitude and pleasure at this information, as she hoped, nay even relied on finding friends, and she trusted, a safe protection from further persecution, in that holy place.

At the foot of the mountain they alighted, and gladly did she once more enjoy the open air, after having been shut up in that close carriage for so many hours. As they gently ascended the hill, and followed the windings of the path, it at length brought them to the chapel of the convent. Here one of the men taking out some papers from the folds of his garment, began to examine them with his companion, at a little distance; so that Amanda could not distinctly hear a word they said. He

selected one paper, and then giving the others to his comrade, left them and proceeded to the monastery.

They waited nearly an hour for his return, pacing to and fro, on the turfy slope before the chapel, during which, the deep, solemn, and holy peals of the vesper service of the monks, induced Amanda to hope, that pity and compassion were the companions of religious harmony; and that her wishes would be realized in that holy sanctuary.

At length two monks, dressed in long grey stuff habits, and cloaks, descended from the monastery, and entered into private conversation with her companion, whose voice she now heard for the first time, and though but faintly, she marked it well.

The other ruffian did not appear, but Amanda thought one of the friars very much resembled him, both in height, bulk, and features, and which a certain disguised habit of the absent villian, but ill concealed.

They had discoursed for some time in a low voice, when the ruffian who had remained with Amanda, suddenly exclaimed, it was time for him to be gone. The friars then received Amanda into their charge, and the villain instantly departed. She was then conducted by the monk to their secluded and extensive edifice. On arriving at the portal, they were admitted into a long stone passage, at the end of which, having crossed a large court, they entered the north wing of the building. One of the friars led Amanda up a flight of steps, at the end of which appeared a pair of large folding doors: he rang a bell, and a nun made her appearance. The monk then delivered Amanda into her care, with strict charge



to see that she was conducted into the presence of the Lady Abbess. Amanda enquired of the nun, if the same building was appropriated to both sexes, and was answered, no ; but that the two buildings were only separated by a large court, surrounded by a high wall.

The nun now conducted her to the parlour of the Lady Abbess. The forbidding and ungracious manner in which she was received, greatly agitated and sunk her spirits ; and she soon discovered that all hope of either happiness or pity for her situation, would be denied her here. The Superior, addressing her abruptly, said—

“I understand you are the young person from Naples, sent hither to be taught your duty, and to be made to know yourself. And I have only to observe for the present, that till this period arrives, I shall punctually fulfil the troublesome office my regard for a noble family induces me to undertake.”

Amanda, agitated and distressed almost beyond description, was some moments before she could make any reply to this haughty and unfeeling address. She instantly perceived whence all her sorrows and misfortunes had originated ; and blamed herself for not avoiding them, and keeping firm to the resolves she had made in the first instance. She blamed herself for being over-persuaded by the wishes of her aunt, and the intreaties and affectionate regards of Di Salvo. However, collecting all the firmness her fatigued and oppressed spirit would allow her to do ; she demanded by whose authority she was sent there, and by what right she had the privilege of detaining her there a prisoner.

The Abbess then informed her, that she would find humility and contrition were most becoming her situation, and would best extenuate the errors and faults she had been guilty of; at the same time, turning to the bell, which she rang, she bid her withdraw.

“What you observe, may be true,” replied Amanda, in a dignified manner, “and the virtues you would recommend me to study, I leave, for that purpose, to my oppressors.”

The Nun entering, she was then conducted to a cell, rather than a chamber, in which a mattress, a chair, and a table, with a crucifix and book placed upon it, composed all the furniture of the gloomy apartment. Here, tired, weary, and oppressed with the deepest sorrow, she sat down on her lowly couch to rest. Amanda surveyed her desolate and gloomy apartment with the most acute feelings; she could not remain unaffected on viewing her altered state. When she thought of Di Salvo, far away, and whom she was perhaps destined never more to behold; she wiped away the bitter tears that chased each other down her pallid cheek, and endeavoured to calm the emotions that almost overpowered her. All that now remained for her, was to await patiently, and to endure present evils which she could not conquer. Then calling to mind the many events which had followed each other in quick succession during the past few weeks; she saw the necessity of trying to fortify her mind with resignation to meet and to bear the trials and sufferings she still found awaited her.

The heavy toll of the convent now tolling the hour of midnight, she retired to rest and soon sunk into a sweet forgetfulness of her woes.

## CHAPTER VI.

The wretch, whom some proud tyrant's doom,  
Has buried in a dungeon's gloom;  
Where a few glimmering rays of light,  
Scarcely distinguish day and night;  
If through his grate a brighter beam,  
Should for a moment chance to gleam,  
Will raise his drooping head and smile,  
And half forget his woes the while.  
So Sorrow lifts her languid eye,  
To meet the look of sympathy.

When Amanda awoke from the peaceful slumber into which she had quickly fallen, on retiring to rest; she gazed wildly around her little cell, and could scarcely believe that she really was a prisoner, until quite convinced to the contrary. She arose and looked through the small lattice, which admitted a faint ray of light into the apartment, but could discern nothing worthy of attention, it being fixed so high from the ground. She sat down and began to ruminate. She thought of poor Annetta, what would become of her; she also thought of Di Salvo: and hope, the assuager of all our griefs, whispered

that perhaps some unforeseen accident or chance, might reveal to him who it was that had committed the cruel outrage upon her liberty. As the idea of the Marchioness obtruded itself upon her thoughts, far other emotions than those of grief, took possession of her mind. The discovery of the absolute rejection of her, by the parents of Di Salvo, awakened all the proper pride, which the mistaken prudence of her aunt, and affection for Di Salvo had lulled to peace in her mind ; and she felt that she could look with infinitely more pride and preference upon the industrious means which had hitherto rendered her independent, than all the rank and distinction which might be clandestinely obtained, or reluctantly conferred. "But it is not yet too late to regain my own esteem, by asserting my independence, and resigning Di Salvo for ever," she exclaimed.

She then thought of his situation with the keenest sensations ; she recollected also the oppression of his mind, and the forebodings of his heart, when last they parted ; and she judged what would be the state of his feelings, when he should discover that she had been torn away from him by the cruel hands of lawless ruffians.

The conscious innocence which had supported her in the presence of the Lady Abbess, began to falter ; her accusation was, in part, but too true.

"I deserve this humiliation," she exclaimed, "for my want of firmness ; therefore I must resign all ideas of ever becoming the wife of Di Salvo—I must abandon him who lives but to love me ; him whom I cannot even think of, without tears ; to whom my vows of unalterable affection have been plighted ; and who may claim

me by the sacred remembrance and sanction of my dying Aunt. Oh wretched alternative, that I can no longer act justly but at the expence and sacrifice of all future happiness. Justly, did I say? can I think of resigning him to never ending sorrow, who will sacrifice all considerations for me? and merely that the pride and prejudice of his family may be gratified."

The anguish she now endured, told but too plainly how much more she dreaded to lose than to accept Di Salvo; and that love was, after all, the most predominant and powerful affection of her heart. In short, she only feared that Di Salvo would for ever remain ignorant of her monastic retreat. Ignorant he was, indeed, at present, of what had happened at the Villa Altieri, and of the distance that separated him from all his soul held most dear.

For several days after Amanda's arrival at the monastery of Santa Floriano, she was not permitted to leave her cell. One day, however, the Abbess, imagining perhaps, that her spirits were reduced, and her manners tamed, by confinement and scanty food, summoned her to her apartment. On Amanda's entering the parlour, she arose with a stately air, to meet her; hoped she was quite recovered from the fatigues of her journey; and that she had endeavoured to become reconciled to the habitation and mode of life chosen for her.

Amanda bowed, but remained silent, while she proceeded with her hypocritical address. When, after an elaborate discourse on the great virtues and preventive care of the Marchioness Di Salvo—the Superior, with a grave and solemn look, informed her that she submitted

two conditions for her acceptance: the one was to accept the veil, and renounce the world for ever; the other, to take that person for her husband, whom the Lady Di Salvo should choose to select for her, and with whom she would bestow a handsome and independent settlement.

Amanda informed the Abbess, that she did not consider that the Lady Di Salvo had any right to exercise the least authority over either her inclinations or actions; and then, with as much composure as she could possibly assume, added, than any hesitation, as to a firm decision on these two points, was unnecessary; that she utterly rejected each of the alternatives; and would have both the Abbess and the Lady di Salvo remember, that the sentiment which bids us revere mild and benificent laws, requires us also to reject with becoming firmness, the counsel of those who dare to violate them.

Amanda was then indignantly ordered by the Lady Abbess, back to her cell, where she pensively reviewed what had just passed, and approved her own frank conduct.

For several tedious days and nights, the solitude of her cell remained unbroken, except by the entrance of the Nun, with a little food, and to replenish her lamp; in all that time not one word was spoken. Impressed with the recollection of former happiness, the present state of Amanda became almost insupportable: when one evening, as the Nun entered to bring her food, Amanda perceived it was not the same sister who had been in the habit of attending her. Amanda thought she perceived a look of pity and compassion, overspread

the countenance of Lucia, as she placed the little casket on the table, and was about to leave the room.

Amanda, encouraged by her pitying look, ventured to speak. After enquiring the hour, she asked what bell it was she heard tolling.

The Nun replied it was the hour of vespers, and they were all assembling in the chapel; she must, therefore, be going. "But," said she, "if you should like to attend vespers, I will name it to the Lady Heloise."

Amanda thanked the friendly Nun for her kind offer, and said she should much like to attend. The Nun then slowly retired.

Amanda gazed upon her delicate form and features, as she left the cell; and felt her heart some little relieved at having met with one being, who seemed to feel for her forlorn and friendless situation. She then laid down on her lowly bed, to take that rest her weary limbs and sinking spirits so much stood in need of. She fell asleep with the pleasing prospect of being perhaps permitted on the following evening, to leave her dreary cell; if only for the short period to attend vespers, she would be grateful.

As the next evening approached, Amanda became anxious to know whether the request of the friendly Nun would be granted. At length she heard the vesper bell tolling its lengthened peals, and soon after, Lucia entered to inform her she had the Lady Abbess's permission to attend in the chapel of the convent, which was situated in a beautiful garden.

Amanda expressed her thanks, and the Nun conducted her, it being near the hour of service. She was placed



among the novices. During the anthem, one of the voices among the choir, awakened all her attention. Its sweet melancholy modulations, seemed particularly to give force to the chaunt which the Nun uttered. The sound of the voice sweetly stole from a remote corner, or part of the gallery; and under the slanting rays of a lamp, which hung suspended, she discovered the pious nun; whose languid features, as she threw back her veil, struck her with a beauty equal to her voice. Amanda thought she observed more of despair, in her beautiful countenance, than calm resignation; and as she listened attentively to some of the sweet, yet melancholy notes she sung; she imagined there were some traits of congeniality in their dispositions and situations. Impressed with this idea, she resolved, should an opportunity present itself, to accost her.

On the following evening, Amanda was again permitted to attend vespers, and beheld Heloisa, the name of the Nun, kneeling beneath the lamp, in private orison, before the service began. She approached her, but the Nun instantly dropped her veil, a reproof to the intruder to withdraw. When the service concluded, Amanda was passed unnoticed by the Nun, and she returned dejected, to her lonely, dismal cell.

She had sat for some time, thoughtfully retracing the past; when she was startled by approaching footsteps, and her reverie was interrupted by the appearance of the Nun, Heloisa; who unlocked the door, and entered.

Amanda rose to meet her, on her entrance;

“Welcome, my kind friend,” said she; “the sight of you is a cordial to my sinking and oppressed heart.

I will not thank you for this proof of friendship ; feeble words cannot express my sentiments of your goodness, therefore acknowledgements are superfluous."

They embraced each other.

"You have indeed my tenderest sympathy, and pity," said Heloisa, "you were, I am sure, designed for other bliss than that of these gloomy cloisters. I will visit you when it is possible for me to do so, without being observed ; I will be your counsellor, your friend, as far as lies in my power ; but if my visits are short, do not think me unkind ; you are ordered to be closely watched, and carefully guarded ; therefore it will be only at certain periods that I can venture to pass a short time with you."

"I perfectly understand you," said Amanda, with a look and feelings expressive of her gratitude, "you have a heart that can pity,—you have suffered too, and know, and feel the delicacy of softening, and alleviating the sorrows of others."

Tears interrupted her. Heloisa pressed her hand, and begged she would tranquilize her feelings, saying, "my heart is not insensible to pity, nor your situation here :"—when fearing she had said too much, she checked herself, then added, "you may believe me to be your friend, but believe it in silence ; do not enquire for, or after me."

The sound of a tinkling bell warned Heloisa she must go, it was a summons for the senior Nuns to the Lady Abbess. The friends parted with many tender wishes and adieus, until they should meet again.

Amanda gazed upon her lovely form as she retired

from the apartment, and wondered what hard fate had placed the Lady Heloisa in that dreary abode; she could not possibly believe it was her own free choice that had doomed her to spend the remainder of her days in such a gloomy, secluded asylum; unless absolutely driven to it, either by tyranny, or her own hard fate. But she hoped Heloisa would at some future period, give her the history of her life, and misfortunes, for that she was unhappy there was not the smallest doubt; or why that look of sadness and despair, which always clouded and hung over her forehead?

“Oh!” mentally, exclaimed Amanda, “she never can have been placed here by her own free inclination.”

In sympathy for the feeling and situation of her friend Heloisa, Amanda for a short time forgot a portion of her own griefs. The prospect of having such a sincere friend to consult and advise with in her present distressing situation, was a source of great consolation to her. She felt convinced from their short acquaintance, that she was of consequence in the convent, and had a great influence over the disposition and actions of the superior. This belief eased her mind of a great part of its sorrows; as she felt assured from the sincerity with which the nun had proffered her friendship and advice, she would be the means of softening by her kind interference, the trials that might await her from the lady abbess's resentment. Amanda now became firm and tranquil under the insults of the lady abbess, except when the soothing, kind attention

of the nun melted her into tears. These gentle drops were refreshing to her long depressed spirits, and she would then indulge them. When she now thought of Di Salvo, it was with feelings of more composure than she had done since torn from him; and Hope, the anchor on which all her feelings and affections rested, whispered consolation to revive her heart, although reflection offered nothing to support it.

A gentle footstep at the door now aroused her from her reverie. It was the good Lucia come to fresh trim her lamp; and to present a small manuscript piece of paper from the lady Heloisa for her perusal and amusement. Amanda thanked the nun, and received the paper with sentiments expressive of the gratitude she felt to the lady Heloisa. "How good she is," exclaimed Amanda, with much emotion; "How kind too, it is of you to visit me; and I am pitied, also by you."

"Hush," said the Nun; "I may be observed; good night, my sister; may your slumbers be light and peaceful."

Amanda's heart sunk; she could not say good night, but her eyes, filled with tears, said more. She pressed the hand of the Nun in silence, who then left the cell. Being left alone, she sat down to peruse the paper Lady Heloisa had sent her; and found it was a beautiful Essay on Friendship. It ran thus:

'There is so pure a delight, and so refined a pleasure in true friendship, that we cannot be surprised

that it has been classed among the first blessings of humanity. But the friendship which ensures this delight is not very readily obtained; virtue, and virtue only, is the basis on which it can be formed with any hope of success, and however powerfully engaged our affections may be without her restraining hand, we can never hope continually to enjoy the esteem of the person upon whom they are bestowed. In young minds there is commonly a strong propensity to particular intimacies, and friendships. Youth, indeed, is the season when friendships are sometimes formed, which not only continue through succeeding life, but which glow to the last with a tenderness unknown to the connexions begun in cooler years. In our earlier years, friendships—intimacies I should say, are easily contracted, and as easily dissolved. Very frequently a trifling quarrel annihilates the slender basis upon which they are constructed, and without regret we form another connection, as fragile as the former.

And such the change the heart displays,  
So frail is early friendship's reign;  
A month's brief lapse, perhaps a day's,  
Will view the mind estranged again.

LORD BYRON.

In maturer age, indeed, our intimacies assume a stronger and more lasting complexion. If we meet with one whose interests and pleasures, whose sentiments and pursuits coincide with our own; it is hardly possible but a friendship ensues, which imparts pleasure to both, and glows to the last, with mutual and unabated ardour.

But what is denominated worldly pleasure, is far different from the pure and disinterested affection which exists between true friends ;

Friends who participate in all we feel,  
Who aid our pleasures, and our sorrows heal.

Sterling regard and implicit confidence distinguish the one, selfishness and hypocrisy the other. Hence, friendship is decried by some, as not worthy to be called a virtue ; being formed only for interested motives, by those who want the assistance and support of others ; and to this, also, we may impute the blighting of many a heart, and the existence of that forbidding object—Misanthropy.

To be fortunate in our friendships, we should exhibit the utmost caution in contracting them. A neglect of this, has caused the man of sensibility many an aching pang ; and has given rise to all that has been advanced in opposition to it, as a virtue.

And another faithful portrait may be drawn. There are a set of beings in the world, who, while a person is in prosperity, are basking in the rays emitted by his misplaced generosity ; and appear to be the most faithful and sincere creatures in existence ; but let the same person be unfortunate—let his situation, by the caprice of fortune, be reversed, and they are the first to shun, the first to insult him. For these despicable parasites, friendship has no charms, beyond the gratification of the passing moments ; and they fly to seek pleasure from the bounty of another.

Love is but friendship of a larger growth; it is, if I may use the expression, the *superlative degree* of friendship. Although the affection we entertain for a beloved and amiable friend, differs in many respects, from the love we feel for an amiable and beautiful woman, yet both have their share of pleasure.

Remember, that by the character of those whom you choose for your friends, your own is likely to be formed, and will most certainly be judged of, by the world.

Be slow therefore, and cautious in contracting intimacy, but when a virtuous friendship is once established, consider it as a sacred engagement. Expose not yourself to the reproach of lightness and inconstancy, which always bespeak either a trifling or a base mind. Reveal none of the secrets of your friend. Be faithful to his interests. Forsake him not in the hour of danger. Abhor the thought of acquiring any advantage by his prejudice or hurt.'

On reading the above essay, Amanda felt not only amused, but edified.

"Yes," she mentally exclaimed, "friendship is one of the noblest passions, and it is a source of the greatest comfort to my sad heart, to know and feel I have a most sincere friend, in the Lady Heloisa."

Amanda now laid aside the paper, and retired to rest.

When she awoke in the morning, she found Lucia had not fastened her door, and the wind gathering along the passage, had blown it open a little way. Curiosity and the idea of liberty, impelled her to look out, and



she found it led into a short passage, at the end of which, a door obstructed her farther progress. On one side she perceived a narrow stone stair-case, which conducted to the room of a lofty turret, which seemed to project from an angle of the convent, over the walls. Approaching the window, she was quite overjoyed once more to breath the fresh air; she stepped into the balcony, and here she beheld a landscape spread below, that enchanted and gladdened all her heart.

“Oh,” she exclaimed, “If I may but be permitted sometimes even to visit this chamber, it will be some alleviation to my sad feelings.”

The consciousness of being a prisoner, was partly forgotten, while she reviewed the grandeur, and truly sublime scenery that presented itself to her delighted senses.

Round the extensive plains, and mountains of various shape and attitude, and towering one above another, and which she had so much admired on her approach to San Floriano, grew the beautiful olive and almond trees: and the flocks feed on their aromatic herbage, during summer; and in the winter they descend to the more mild and sheltered plains of Tavogliere di Puglia.

It was a calm, lovely morning, and the romantic beauties of the surrounding scenery, made her, for a short period, forget a portion of her sorrows. The view on the left recalled her to a sense of her situation. On that side lay the dreadful defile she had traversed on coming to that gloomy mansion: and whose falling waters murmured like distant thunder. On the other sides the scenery was truly grand and picturesque: the

sublimity of which, had drawn her thoughts, for a short period, from things created, and had fixed them on the Creator.

Here, gazing upon the stupendous imagery around her, the mind became elevated to its Maker, in the midst of his sublime works.

Amanda was aroused from the thoughtful mood into which she had fallen, by hearing the sound of approaching footsteps, and a key turning in the door of the passage below. On descending to know who it was that had entered her chamber, she found the rigid sister who conducted her, there; and whose department it was in general to bring her food, and see that she was securely locked up. She had brought Amanda her breakfast, and after cautioning her against prying beyond the passage, she secured the door and withdrew; and for several days she was kept a close prisoner.



## CHAPTER VII.

With sudden start he turn'd—  
And pointed to the distant glimmering of light.

We now return to the indefatigable Di Salvo and his servant Bardo, who, after passing the night in the sub-

terraneous chamber of the fortress of Patuzzi, awoke in the greatest consternation, and found the flambeau had expired, and they were left in utter darkness. It seemed that all the light this room could receive, was admitted through the grating in the adjoining chamber; and the morning was not far enough advanced to admit light sufficient for them to see each other, or to again examine the chamber they were in.

After having waited for some time, they again tried their efforts to open the door, and traversed every part of the chamber, to endeavour if they could find some outlet; but without success. Bardo sat down by the side of his master, quite dejected, and lamenting the probability of their being left to die with hunger. A long silence succeeded, which Bardo broke by suddenly starting up, and exclaiming—

“Look, Signor; look yonder, I see a light! Behold a ray of light shines through the door of the vault.”

Scarcely could they believe it possible, or that they were in their senses, for all had been as still as death, nor had they heard the door open, or its massive bolts withdrawn.

Bardo in a transport of joy, sprang towards it. It was indeed unfastened. He threw it wide open, and they darted through the court into the open air, without looking for, or observing anything particular to intercept them. They were not long before they reached Naples, and were rejoiced once more to find themselves at the Palace Di Salvo.

As soon as Rosano had recovered a little from his late adventure, and had taken some necessary refreshment,

began to prepare for his visit to Altieri. His eagerness to know the state of affairs there, was great; and his anxiety to ascertain if Amanda was safe at the convent La Martino, was augmented by the mysterious words of the supposed Monk, as they entered the fortress on the preceding night.

These ideas pressing upon his mind, he set out without further delay.

On his entering the garden, the strongest agitation pervaded his whole frame. It was mid-day, yet all seemed quiet and still as at the midnight hour. He was fearfully surprised to find all the lower lattices closed. He surveyed the building for some time in silence, then walked round to see or to listen if he could hear any sound from within. On turning one of the angles, he perceived a small low door, standing wide open; he ventured in, and listened for some time. Still hearing no sound of voices, or indeed, any noise, or footstep, he ascended to the hall, and from thence to the saloon, where he discovered several boxes and parcels, which were packed ready to be conveyed away. He now judged that Amanda must be with Annetta above; still preparing for her departure; therefore he took up a book, and reclining on one of the couches, endeavoured to amuse himself until they should make their appearance.

He had now waited a considerable time, still he could hear neither voice or footstep, and as the day was far spent, he began to grow very impatient, and anxious to see Amanda.

At length he ventured to go in search of her. He entered first one apartment, and then another, till having

wandered all over the house, his fear and anxiety became almost insupportable. Having again descended to the saloon, he looked over the different parcels which were there placed, one upon another, and found they had only the name of Amanda written upon them.

It then occurred to him, that perhaps Amanda, accompanied by Annetta, was gone to the convent *La Martino*; this idea once formed, he thither bent his steps. On his arrival at the portal, he enquired if she was there, when being answered in the negative, he withdrew; and not knowing what to think or conjecture, he wandered down by the sea shore, for a walk, intending to return to the *Villa*.

Restless and anxious, though scarcely knowing whither to bend his course, he had strolled for some time along the beach, when he perceived several fishermen and Lazzaroni, who were loitering along the strand, waiting for boats from *St. Lucallo*. *Di Salvo*, with folded arms, and his hat drawn over his face, to shade it from particular observation, paced the edge of the waves, listening to their murmurs, as they brake gently at his feet. As he gazed on the beauties around him, all consciousness of their sublimity was lost in a melancholy reverie respecting his beloved Amanda. The *Villa Altieri* appeared at a distance, rising over the shore; and he remembered how often from thence they had together viewed this lovely and enchanting scene.

But this loved spot had now lost all its charms; while ignorant of the fate of Amanda, he felt melancholy, and his spirits greatly depressed. The present scene brought to his recollection, the evening when he had last seen

this picture from the Villa Altieri; when seated in the orangery with Amanda and Marietta, on the night previous to the death of the latter; when Amanda had so solemnly been given to his care, and had so affectingly consented to the dying request of her beloved relative. The recollection of that scene rushed across the mind of Di Salvo with all its full force.

He now came up with the fishermen who were busily talking, and waiting for the arrival of their stores. The evening was exceedingly sultry, and there was every appearance of a thunder storm. The clouds were gathering fast, and the big drops now and then fell to the earth. The birds flew to seek shelter, and all nature seemed to await in awful silence, the approaching conflict.

"Ah! Signor mio," exclaimed one of the Lazzaroni, "I think you had better hasten to the cabin of brother Rodonal, for the storm approaches very fast."

"How far is it?" said Di Salvo, "to the retreat you have just mentioned."

"Not far, Signor; I will shew you."

"Lead on," said Di Salvo—for the thunder now rolled heavily, and the lightning flashed awfully, and he thought any place that would afford a temporary shelter from the storm, would be preferable to running the risk of being exposed to its fury, and being drenched with the beating rain.

They now arrived at the cabin of Rodonal.

"What ho," exclaimed the guide.

After waiting a few seconds, a sturdy, gruff-looking figure, made his appearance at a small window or out-

let, and enquired who was there, and what they wanted.

"Avast, there," cried the guide; "open the door, and give us shelter from the storm."

"Hum!" said Rodonal, "could you find no shelter, but here?"

"Come, open the door," said the man, "or mayhap we shall enter without your leave:" for the storm raged now with great fury.

Presently the door was opened, and they were let into a dirty dark room.

"Come, strike up a light," said the guide, "and make the Signor welcome; ye will not, perhaps, rue the day."

Rodonal now eyed Di Salvo with a suspicious, scrutinizing glance, and muttering something to himself, immediately struck a light, and heaped a few faggots on the fire, which was almost extinguished.

He then reached out a leathern bottle, and some sea biscuit, but Di Salvo declined taking any, saying he merely requested a shelter from the storm.

As he said this, a most vivid flash of lightning, accompanied by the loudest peals of thunder, shook the cabin to its very foundation; and the next instant the piercing shriek of a female, rang through the cabin. It issued from an adjoining room.

Di Salvo started from his seat, and was making towards the room, when Rodonal intercepted his entrance, by saying he had no business there.

Again the thunder rolled, and again the cry of distress or fright, was repeated.

Di Salvo now forced his way past the man, and insisted upon knowing from whence the sounds proceeded,



and whether from fright or distress; therefore he instantly entered the room. But who can describe his consternation and surprise, on beholding poor Annetta, with her hands still tied behind her, and the end of the cord fastened to a ring in the floor. Di Salvo immediately released the poor affrighted creature, and began to make enquiries how she came there, and where she had left her mistress, the Lady Amanda. But the terrified Annetta was too much reduced by want, fright, and distress, to answer any enquiries for the present; and could only exclaim as he entered—

“What! the Signor Di Salvo! Ah, Santa Maria.”

Di Salvo now turned to ask, indeed, to demand of Rodonal, by what means Annetta had been brought to his cabin, and by what authority; and also if he knew anything of the Lady Amanda.

Rodonal, in a surly gruff voice, replied, that he was not at liberty to answer his enquiries; but he dared say Bartello would be there shortly, and would give him every information on the subject.

After waiting a considerable time, and no person appearing, as Rodonal had anticipated, Di Salvo again insisted on being informed how Annetta came to be a prisoner in the cabin.

Rodonal then briefly related that she was brought there by one of his companions, whose name was Bartello, and another person whom he did not know; that Bartello had promised faithfully to return, and release her, as that evening.

It turned out, that Bartello knew no more of the affair than Rodonal; he had only been hired to assist in secu-

ring Annetta, while the other villain, whom he either did not, or pretended he did not, know, carried off the Lady Amanda.

The storm having now subsided, Di Salvo bid Annetta compose herself, and he would himself conduct her to the Villa Altieri again. He then walked out to make his observations on the situation of the cabin, and to ascertain if the late storm had occasioned any serious injury. He quickly returned, having satisfied his curiosity, when poor Annetta leaning on his arm, they moved slowly towards the Villa.

As they proceeded along, he learned the dreadful intelligence, that her mistress had been carried off by two ruffians who were masked, while two others had tied her hands, and dragged her to the cabin where he had discovered her; telling Rodonal that as soon as they returned, she should be released, and sent back to the Villa.

"Would to God," said Di Salvo, putting his hand on his sword, "that they would return at this moment. Revenge! Ah! I would indeed be revenged on such cowardly villains," he exclaimed.

Being arrived at the Villa, it would be difficult to tell who was the most affected. On entering the house, Annetta's cries became most piteous, and Di Salvo paced the hall, almost distracted, and raving like a madman. At length, Annetta, perceiving the state of Di Salvo's feelings, endeavoured to calm her own grief, that she might advise and administer consolation to him. Her entreaties had the desired effect, and he was prevailed upon to compose himself, that he might be ena-

bled to adopt some measures for discovering the rout the villains had taken with Amanda, and endeavour to rescue the treasure he had lost. Turning to Annetta who sat dejected in a corner of the hall, he said—

“But did you not hear them name one word that could lead you to suspect who it was that had employed them to commit this cruel outrage upon your mistress?”

“Ah, No, Signor,” she replied; “they were particularly careful not to utter a word in my hearing.”

The more he endeavoured to reason upon the late events, the more he was convinced of the cause whence they proceeded. He saw but too plainly that Amanda had been torn away from him by the orders and machinations of his family; and that he had been decoyed into the fortress of Paluzzi, and detained there to prevent his interference in the diabolical schemes, or to be near to rescue her from their power. The mysterious words of the strange Monk, on their entrance to the fortress, corroborated his suspicions. The Monk he resolved into the Father Raldino, the secret and direful adviser of his mother. And yet he could scarcely reconcile the inconsistency of his appearing at the fortress, in the dress he usually wore there. Still, he felt quite convinced, that if it was not Raldino, himself, it was one of his vile agents.

Di Salvo, when he could think coolly, believed he had discovered the instigators and the designs of the whole affair. He had himself, spoken of his former adventure at Paluzzi; and it now appeared that his family had taken advantage of the curiosity he had expressed, to lead him into the vaults, as that would be the most

effectual means of preventing his opposing the plans they had laid for their barbarous conduct.

With this conviction so strongly impressed upon his mind, he determined to have separate interviews with the Marquis and his mother; and if he failed to obtain that intelligence of Amanda's retreat, which he felt but too firmly persuaded it was in their power to give him, he then resolved to closely interrogate the holy father.

He now bid Annetta secure every entrance to the Villa, and not let any one enter till the Gardener came. He then bid her tell him to stay at Altiere, and to keep strait guard until he returned. While he was giving these orders, the Gardener entered with his son; Di Salvo then informed him of the late events at the Villa, and bid him keep close watch, and guard every avenue and entrance to the house, until he saw him again: and the Man promising punctually to obey his orders, Di Salvo returned home.

As soon as he arrived at the Palace, he repaired to the Marquis's apartment, and was received by him more friendly than he could have anticipated, considering the state of their feelings when last they parted. He threw himself on his knees, at the feet of his father, and implored, nay even begged, if he valued his life, to say what was become of Amanda, if he knew.

The Marquis appeared thunderstruck at his manner and words, and desiring him to rise, asked an explanation.

When Di Salvo had given him the desired information of all he knew, relative to her disappearance, he paused and appeared thoughtful for some time. On Di Salvo

again entreating him to tell him what was become of her, the Marquis positively declared his total ignorance of the affair, and Di Salvo left his father, fully satisfied that he had not any knowledge of, nor was he in any way concerned in the flight of Amanda.

The appeal to the Marchioness produced no information, beyond that of a strong conviction of her hypocrisy. She pretended to lament the affair altogether, but declared her total ignorance of Amanda's flight. He left her, fully persuaded, from her agitated and embarrassed manner, that she not only knew, but was an accessory to the perpetration of the deed. And he determined to watch her closely.

Di Salvo's appeal to the Father Raldino, for information respecting Amanda, was as little productive as the appeal either to his father or mother; but it was more eventful.

Having repaired to the convent San Spirito, he enquired for the holy Father, and was informed, or at least directed to his chamber, where lay in different parts of the room, several instruments of torture, a crucifix, and other religious articles. Di Salvo not finding him there, again returned to the porter, who informed him, he must be in the chapel or church; or perhaps in the garden, for that he had not passed the gate during the morning.

"Did he pass it last night or the night before?" said Di Salvo, impatiently.

"Yes, he did both evenings," replied the porter, "but he returned to vespers; it is contrary to the rules of our order to sleep out, or be absent at or after the vesper

hour: and he is too pious to infringe the rules of the society. Go, Signor, you will doubtless find him at his devotions in the church."

Di Salvo instantly proceeded thither, and in the most gloomy aisle of the church, fixed as a statue, and apparently lost to every object around him, he traced the gaunt figure of the Father Raldino. He approached, and looking under his cowl, he thus addressed him.

"Father, this place is too sacred to discourse on the business between us. Will you accompany me to the garden?"

The Father took no notice of him, but appeared to be so much absorbed in his devotions, as not to hear him.

Di Salvo, from the irritated and distressed state of his feelings, judged the conduct of Raldino to be partly hypocrisy; he vociferated—

"Speak, thou hypocrite—speak—where is Amanda Lusnette? I know you to be a villain! the ruffian who has torn her from me—the predictor of Signora Marietta's death; the figure, the Monk, which decoyed me to the fortress of Paluzzi; the author of all my misery. Wretch," he exclaimed, laying his hand on his sword, "where is my Amanda? Tell me instantly, or I will unmask your vile hypocrisy to the brotherhood."

During the latter part of this impetuous address, several of the monks had entered the church, before whom he again proceeded—

Speak, thou villain, nor think to shroud your turpitude in silence. Do you know the convent Del Pianto? the confessional of the black crucifix? Do you?"

Di Salvo would have proceeded to greater extremities, but was interrupted by the friars, who loudly demanded who he was, that dared thus intrude, and violate the order and sanctity of that sacred place.

"Away with him to the Father Abbot," cried some of the enraged Priests; "let him undergo the severest punishment of our laws, for thus daring to insult one of the most holy of our society, during an act of penance."

"Away, thou sacreligious boy," exclaimed Raldino, with a look of terror and contempt, as he threw back his cowl, and darted a most revengeful glance at Di Salvo. He then exclaimed in a still higher tone, "thou shalt tremble for the consequences of thy daring impiety."

Di Salvo now perceiving it would be dangerous to stay any longer, burst from the surrounding Monks, and escaped through the church door into the street, and arrived at home without any interruption.

He was met in the hall by Bardo, who informed him that he had made every enquiry, but could learn no tidings of the rout the villains had taken with Amanda, nor could he meet with a single individual who could give him the slightest information with regard to her flight: all appeared ignorant, and surprised at the enquiry.

Almost distracted, and restless with impatience to learn tidings of her, if possible, in the evening Di Salvo strayed down by the sea shore again, whence the late residence of his lost Amanda, the Villa Altiero, appeared above the cliffs. The sight agitated him greatly. At some little distance from the place where he stood, he



observed some Fishermen engaged in earnest conversation, which attracted his attention, although they seemed to take no notice of him. Walking a little nearer to the spot where they stood, he overheard one of the narrators busily detailing the account of his having released Annetta from the cabin of Rodonal.

This awakened all his attention, and approaching them, he eagerly demanded if they knew Annetta.

One of them said he did, for he had been in the habit of serving the good old Signora Marietta with fish for many years. That he had been there that morning, and she had told him the whole affairs that had recently happened. The fishermen all agreed that the Lady Amanda had been taken away in a carriage; for one of the Lazzaroni remembered having seen a coach and four horses drive at a most furious rate through Bracelli, just at day break, on the same morning as she was taken away. The blinds and windows were all close shut, and on that account he did not think any one was inside at the time he saw it.

Di Salvo thanked them for their information; the hint was quite sufficient, and the following morning at day break, he and Bardo set out for Bracelli, enquiring of every person they met, and at all the post houses, if a carriage had past on such a morning; but they arrived at Bracelli without hearing the least tidings. After wandering for many days with as little success, they again returned to Bracelli, to take rest, and make every enquiry.

## CHAPTER VIII.

And I have proved it—I have known the hour  
Of darkness, that o'ershadows all the soul,  
When man—unfeeling man, assumes the power  
To crush misfortune by his proud controul.

But gentle soother of the grief-worn mind,  
Thy sweet persuasion can a spell impart,  
That bids the stream of pure affection wind  
In floods of joy around the troubled heart.

For several days Amanda was prohibited by the rigid Nun, Peppina, leaving her cell, or having any communication or intercourse with any one. One morning, however, to her great surprise and joy, the Lady Heroisa entered her cell with her breakfast; her expressive features anticipated the unwelcome intelligence she was about to communicate.

“I am come,” said she, with a mournful voice, “by order of the Lady Abbess, to prepare you for the vows, since you reject the husband proposed for you. You are to be compelled to accept the veil immediately, and contrary to the customary form on these occasions, the ceremony of taking the black veil is to follow that of the white one directly.”

The Nun paused, when Amanda firmly replied—

“You may inform the Lady Abbess, that my determination is fixed, sacred, and unalterable. No! never. I reject them both,” she exclaimed, “nor shall all their arts or force compel me to commit an act, or my tongue to pronounce and seal those vows which my very soul revolts at. I will die first! and if I am constrained to appear before the altar, it shall be only to protest against that tyranny which forced me there.”

“I cannot condemn your resolution,” said Heloisa, “but doubtless you have many friends and relations, whose society is dear to you, and from whom it would be dreadful to part.”

“No, my dear friend,” said Amanda, mournfully, “I have neither.”

“Is it possible?” said Heloisa, “and yet so attached to the world. You will pardon me, my dear friend, but may I be permitted to ask your name?”

“Most certainly,” was the reply. “My name is Amanda Lusinette.”

“What! Amanda Lu--”

“Amanda Lusinette,” rejoined her companion.

Let me ask, do you know any one of that name?”

“None,” replied the sister, mournfully; but your features so very much resemble those of a lost and dear friend—”

Here she paused and seemed much agitated, at the recollections that obtruded themselves upon her mind. At length, recovering herself a little, she arose to retire.

“Farewell,” said she, “I will soften the harshness of

your refusal to the vindictive Abbess, and endeavour to fortify your mind for the heavy trials that may await you. It will require all the energy and firmness you can command, to meet her, when once she has been opposed, or her commands disobeyed. Allow me to advise you, my dear friend. Apparent submission, I do assure you, will be the best line of conduct to pursue; by that means you may meet with a few indulgences that will, perhaps, otherwise be denied you. The door of your cell shall be left open, that you may visit the turret chamber; and I will send you some books, drawing materials, and a few other articles to amuse you."

Amanda embraced her friend with feelings of gratitude, and promised implicitly to follow her advice.

As soon as Heloisa was gone, Amanda mounted to her lofty retreat, to inhale the refreshing breezes, and enjoy the beauty of the surrounding prospect.

Towards noon she was summoned from her chamber, by a sister from the Abbess, who gave her permission to dine with the Novices. She was conducted to the dinner table by the Nun. Amanda did not enjoy this privilege; she felt uneasy and little pleased with being exposed to the impertinent gaze and rude remarks of her companions; and as soon as the repast was ended, she returned, for the first time, with eagerness to her cell. The Sister who reconducted her, having seen that the door at each end of the passage was secure, left Amanda's unfastened. On again ascending to her turret chamber, she was delighted with Heloisa's kind attention in having provided her a chair, a table, and the promised articles of amusement. She took up a book, and sat

reading till the vesper bell rung for prayers, when she was summoned by the Nun to attend in the chapel. When the service was ended, Heloisa walked with her in the garden of the convent, but was particularly careful on what subject they conversed, and guarded in her manner of behaviour, lest any idea of suspicion should arise with regard to her friendly conduct towards Amanda. After they had taken their walk, Heloisa adjourned with Amanda to her cell, when she informed her friend that the Lady Abbess had determined to proceed to extremities, if she continued refractory. "Such extremities," said the Nun, "that you cannot comprehend, nor I dare explain! Imagination cannot conceive, nor words depict the horrors of —"

But I dare not say more! Oh! how willingly would I save you from the evils preparing; but pray let me impress it upon you, to bear in mind, that the only chance of escape, is, by abandoning every appearance of resistance. By temporising you may obtain the usual time of preparation for taking the veil; during which some unforeseen event may arise to rescue you.

But—hark! the bell announces the assembling of the Nuns in the Abbess's apartment, where I dare not be absent. Good night! dear sister; may the holy saints protect you. Reflect, I most earnestly conjure you, that your adverse decision will prove the most fatal act of your life. Good night. Remember.

Amanda's eyes were fixed upon the Nun as she retired, and for some time she sat lost in conjecturing what could be the dreadful issue of her refusing to take the veil.

"Oh, how grateful I feel for the kind interest she

seems to take, and feels, I am convinced, for my welfare," exclaimed Amanda, "by the advice she offers. Yes, I will yield my judgment, in this instance, and have only to hope that the Abbess will not mistake gentleness for irresolution."

At noon, the step of the Nun, who brought her food, recalled her from the turret chamber, and she tremblingly descended, expecting to be closely confined again: how great, then, was her surprise and joy, at seeing the austere Nun retire, without speaking, or even shutting the door of the cell after her; and her manner indicated how very reluctantly she obeyed the kind commands of one who was greatly her superior. The moment she was gone, Amanda partook of the refreshment, and then again hastened to her delightful turret chamber: where she perceived her friend Heloise had added a few more books to the other articles of amusement, already placed there for her. Amanda forbore for some moments to examine the books, that the pleasing emotions she felt, might not be interrupted. On looking into, and perusing some of them, to her great disappointment and regret, she found they treated of mystical subjects: these she instantly laid aside. But some of the others proved to be the writings of the best Italian poets, and she was somewhat surprised that they should have found their way to the library of a Nun; but she was too much pleased with these volumes, to dwell upon the enquiry, how they came into the possession of her friend.

Having chosen one of the books, she took her seat at the open window, with the intention of perusing the

beautiful little volume of Tasso ; but could not confine her thoughts to the work of the poet, however beautiful. The sun was setting, and the mountain tops were still lighted by his glorious beams. The silence and repose of the surrounding scene, promoted the tender, melancholy ideas that pervaded her mind. She thought of Di Salvo, and wept ; of him whom she had not the smallest doubt, but would be indefatigable in his search after her ; and while she witnessed in imagination, the grief and distraction which her mysterious departure and absence would have occasioned him ; the fortitude with which she had resisted her own sufferings, yielded to the picture of his. She laid down the book and took up her lute, for the first time since her arrival at Santa Floriano. Fortunately it was slung round her neck, on the night she last touched its chords in the pavilion ; and which had been carried with her when the ruffians bore her from the gardens of the Villa Altiero. She now attuned its chords, and with a voice modulated by the soft melancholy, that at this silent hour pervaded her mind, occasioned by the feelings which were too predominant to be repressed, she entered the balcony, and sang the following beautiful lines, with the most enchanting sweetness.

#### ABSENCE.

When round the heart, affection's tie  
Too close is bound for time to free ;



How oft is heav'd the painful sigh,  
Relentless power, at thought of thee.

'Tis thy delight the cords to part,  
Which Nature's hand has finely strung  
Around the plighted lover's heart,  
On which his hope—his life is hung.

When Friendship's pure, exalted name,  
Two youthful, mutual hearts have known,  
If thou hast rais'd the phantom, fame,  
To grasp the shadow, one has flown.

Yet though to burning sands conveyed,  
Or doom'd to brave the northern pole,  
Thy influence never can pervade,  
Or change the temper of his soul.

And trust me, in the lover's breast,  
More strong the cherish'd flame will burn,  
And warmer be the wish express'd,  
Fed by the hope of sweet return.

Then lay thy cruel arts aside,  
Since vain and impotent they be;  
No more the faithful pain divide,  
Nor longer part my friend from me.

Sweet flatt'rer, Hope, thy fairy visions shed;  
With soothing influence calm my anxious fears;

Oh tell me, blessings hover o'er the head  
Of him, whose love alone my life endears.

Belov'd illusion, dear unto my heart,  
The present thou hast power to gild in peace.  
Sweet hope! Oh never from my soul depart,  
But gently bid each anxious sorrow cease.

At the conclusion of the piece, she laid down her lute, and sat musing for a short period, when she was suddenly awakened from her reverie, by the sound of the great bell which now began to toll its lengthened peals, and summoned her to prepare for mass.

She descended to her cell, to await the arrival of the Nun, who was to conduct her to the chapel. There, as usual, she was met by her friend Heloisa, who after the service was ended, invited her to walk in the garden of the convent. As she passed beneath the melancholy shade of the cypress trees, that ranged on either side of the long walks, and formed a majestic canopy, almost excluding the rays of the beautiful orb of night. Heloisa conversed with her on serious and general topics, carefully avoiding any mention of the Lady Abbess, although she much wished to know what effect her firm refusal had produced.

Heloisa accompanied her to her cell, and there no longer scrupled to relieve her mind from a state of uncertainty, as it appeared necessary for Amanda to know that the Abbess was quite as obstinate as Amanda was firm.

"I again repeat," said the Nun, "that whatever may be your resolution, let me advise you to allow the Superior some hopes of compliance, lest she should immediately proceed to put her commands in force."

"And what, my dear friend," said Amanda, "can be worse for me to encounter, or have to endure, than either of the alternatives already rejected? Why should I descend to dissimulation?"

"To save yourself from immediate and undeserved punishment and sufferings," replied her friend, mournfully.

"Yes, but I should then incur deserved ones," said Amanda, "and forfeit, by so doing, my own good opinion, which could never be restored."

As she said this, she looked at the Nun with a look of gentle reproach.

"I applaud the justness of your sentiment," replied Heloise, regarding her with a look of kind compassion. "Alas! that such a mind—so innocent, so noble, should be subjected to the power of injustice and depravity."

"No, not subjected," said Amanda, "I have chosen the best of the alternatives that are left me, I will endeavour to endure with fortitude, and can you say then that I am subjected?"

"Alas, my dear friend," replied Heloise, "you know not what you promise; you do not, cannot comprehend the sufferings which may be preparing for you."

As she said this, her eyes, filled with tears, and her emotion, greatly affected and surprised Amanda.

"Your kindness deeply affects me," said Amanda, "and I am fearful of appearing insensible of it, when I

reject your advice, yet I cannot adopt it. The very dissimulation which I should employ in self defence, may be the means of involving me in destruction."

The fear that perhaps Heloisa was capable of treachery, for an instant darted across her mind: and her heart sickened at the dreadful supposition; but she as soon dismissed the thought, without suffering herself to examine its probability.

"If I could consent to take your advice," resumed Amanda, after a long pause, "what could it avail me? am I not in the power of the Abbess? and a discovery of my duplicity, would only provoke her vengeance, and I should be punished, even for having sought to avoid injustice."

"If deceit is at any time excusable," replied Heloisa, reluctantly, "it is where we practise it in self-defence. There are some few situations when it may be resorted to without our incurring ignominy, and yours is one of those cases. But I will acknowledge, that all the good I expect, is from the delay temporising may procure you. Some event may happen in that time, to rescue you from your present distressing condition."

"Oh, could I but believe so," said Amanda. "But, alas! I have no relative, no friend to rescue me. To what possibility do you allude?"

"The Marchioness may relent."

"Does then your possibility of good rest with her, my dear friend? If so, I am in despair again. I could not bring my mind to forfeit my integrity upon such a frail foundation."

"But there are other possibilities, my dear friend," said Heloisa, "but, hark, I hear a bell—"

"What bell is it?" said Amanda.

"It is the chime which usually assembles the Nuns in the apartment of the Lady Abbess, where she dispenses her evening benediction; therefore I must immediately attend, my absence may be observed. Good night, dear sister, may the holy saints guard, direct, and protect you. Reflect, again I beseech you, on what I have advised, and remember, I entreat you, to consider that the consequences of your decision must be solemn, and may be fatal."

Heloisa spoke this with such a strong degree of meaning and emphasis, that Amanda now most anxiously yet fearfully wished and dreaded to know more; but before she had recovered from the surprise which the manner of Heloisa had occasioned, the Nun had left the lonely room.

"Alas!" said Amanda, mournfully looking round her desolate apartment; "I fear there is little hope of escape for me, from my merciless persecutors. Oh! Di Salvo! would to God—" then suddenly checking herself, she fervently offered up her prayers to Him, who alone can give strength to the sinking mind, in the hour of trial and distress. She then retired to rest with a fervent hope and a firm determination to await with calm resignation every event.

## CHAPTER IX.

More deeply rooted in his bosom,  
And usurping with dread control, lurked  
The vile fiend, 'Revenge.'

While Father Raldino was exposing to the Marchioness, the enormity of Di Salvo's public insult on his sacred character, in the church of San Spirito, the Marquis was lamenting aloud the lengthened absence of his son, whom he dearly loved; and fearing some accident might happen to him, he heartily wished he had not been so harsh and rigid in his conduct towards him. He had several times had very serious altercations with the Marchioness, respecting Di Salvo and the unfortunate attachment which they considered he had formed with Amanda. He had also very closely questioned her, if she knew any thing of the fate of her and his son, but never could obtain any satisfactory information from her with regard to either of them; and after their conversations, they generally parted in an unfriendly and equally unhappy manner.

The change that had taken place in his mind, with regard to his son's conduct, was a crime in the Marquis

quite sufficient to exclude him from the future consultations of the Marchioness and her Confessor in the affairs of his family. He therefore became peevish and fretful, and would pass whole days in his study, without exchanging a word with any person except his faithful servant, Lupo.

During this state of affairs at home, Di Salvo and his servant, Bardo, were wandering from town to village, without hearing any successful tidings of Amanda. From Bracelli he proceeded to Morgayni, where he lost every trace of her. At this town the road divided itself into several directions. Hesitating, and not knowing which would be the best to choose, he took one by chance, and after traversing some of the wild tracts of the Appenines, he became lost and bewildered in the woods of Rugieni. Tired and weary, they sat down under a cluster of trees, to rest themselves, and to repose for a short time from the heat of the scorching rays of the sun. They had not taken their seats long, when the solemn swell of a vocal chorus, warned the travellers that a convent, or some place of worship was not far off. They instantly started up, and approaching near to the road from whence the sounds proceeded, instead of a convent, they discovered a party of Pilgrims, who were going to pay their devotions at a shrine, in a Carmelite convent at some distance. Di Salvo determined to join the procession, and for this purpose entered into conversation with one of the party.

As they proceeded onward, at the crossing of two roads, they perceived another company of Pilgrims coming, who were also going to the same shrine. They



halted for a short time, to let the party come up with them, and then they journeyed on together.

Di Salvo now joined one of the fresh party, and on entering into conversation relative to the place they were going to, he understood that the shrine was in a convent, partly inhabited by Nuns. This information immediately determined him to accompany them all the way. Di Salvo then dismounted and the Father Director rode his horse, while he set forward on foot, conversing first with one friar and then with another.

During the night, the holy Pilgrims told many a facetious story. Di Salvo asked one of them if they were in their journeys encountered, or were attacked by robbers, —the banditti that infested that part of the country?

The Pilgrim answered, no, they never had been annoyed, and he fervently hoped they should not.

“No, indeed,” said an intelligent, old, and facetious Pilgrim, who then came up with them, “I hope we never shall, for if we were, I think we should stand in need of the advice which the Cardinal gave the soldiers.”

“What was that?” said Di Salvo.

“Why the Cardinal was sent by his holiness, the pope, to advise the soldiers what to do, when a part of his dominions were attacked by the enemy.”

“We should be happy to hear what advice the pope sent them, if you can favour us with the particulars,” said Di Salvo.

“If my poor memory will allow me, I will do so,” said he. “Why you must know, at a time when some of the pope’s dominions were invaded by some of the

neighbouring states, an army was collected to meet the foe; but previous to the engagement beginning, a Cardinal, commissioned by *his holiness*, went among the soldiers, and exhorted them to fight valiantly; exert their utmost courage, and not to fear death; for should they lose their lives, the pope promised them a plenary remission of all their sins, and that *they should dine with angels in paradise.*"

Having thus spoken, he was about to retire, when one of the soldiers called after him,—

"*Eh, my Lord Cardinal, will you not stay and dine with us in paradise?*"

"No, no," says he, "my dinner hour is not *yet come.*"

Di Salvo smiled at the Pilgrims story, and said, "we are indeed, apt to give that advice to others, which we do not always feel inclined to follow ourselves."

They travelled on leisurely until the following noon, when the party came in sight of the village, at the foot of the mountain, on which was the sacred shrine: the leader dismounted, and as soon as the party all came up, they fell into a procession of two and two. They struck the chords of their instruments, and moved forward, singing loud strains of melancholy music.

Another night passed, during which, by means of Bardo, and a ducat, Di Salvo procured the habit of one of the pilgrims, and at an early hour in the morning they again set forward. Having reached the summit of the mountain, they journeyed on till they came to the green-plat before the chapel of the convent: here they halted, and after chanting several anthems, about ten of the friars came out to meet them, when they were conducted

through two winding passages into a side court, overhung by a tremendous rock ; this court led into the church ; Di Salvo entered with them, and followed some of the devotees through a side aisle into an inner court, overhung also by different projections of the rock, and which contained the shrine of our Lady of Mount Carmel. Here Di Salvo kneeled to avoid singularity, and remained so till the loud organ peal announced that the mass was begun. He arose and followed some of the pilgrims into the church, where he took his seat among them. The organ again sounded, and the service proceeded with some of the most sublime pieces. Di Salvo, unable to endure the pregnant feelings which the harmonic sounds excited, was about to leave the church, when the tolling of a bell, like the knell of death, arrested his footsteps. It struck at intervals between the feminine voices of the nuns, and the louder tones of the monks. He also observed that on the steps of the altar, a black velvet pall was laid, and the choir was strewed with the choicest flowers, and palm branches.

In a few moments, amidst the pomp everywhere displayed, the Lady Abbess, dressed in her pontifical robes, advanced with stately steps, and followed by the Nuns and the Novices, who were carrying tapers and the holy incense.

Di Salvo enquired if it was any particular ordination day, or what was the meaning of the great splendour and preparation which now excited his attention.

He was informed the ceremony was the profession of a Nun.

Di Salvo eagerly enquired her name.

The Friar pointed out the interesting object to him, but could not resolve his question.

He now kept his straining eyes fixed on the lovely and devoted form before him. The ceremony began. The Father Abbot commenced with an exhortation of great length, after which followed a solemn hymn, which seemed to agitate and affect the Nun. The Father then repeated a long prayer, during which the Nun seemed to regain some degree of composure, and joined in the chaunt which followed. While they were singing the anthem, Di Salvo felt almost palsied. He now thought he traced the vatany. Gasping for breath, he listened, and was almost certain he heard the same sounds which had captivated his ear in the church of San Lorenzo. At length he was relieved from his anxiety by the holy Father withdrawing the white veil in the act of putting on the black one. He saw it was not Amanda.

When this ceremony had concluded, it was immediately followed by another, this was called a novication. A young Lady was led forward, from one of the back seats, between two Nuns, to the altar. The priest began the ceremony by asking a question, and at the same time withdrew her veil.

“I protest,” said the voice.

Di Salvo could contain himself no longer; he rushed forward, and seizing her uplifted hands—it was Amanda! He threw back the cowl which shaded his face; she knew him, and giving a faint shriek, fell senseless into the arms of Heloisa.

During the confusion occasioned by this sudden interruption to the ceremony, Di Salvo folded his Amanda to his heart, and as the bustle a little subsided, she began to recover. The lovers interchanged mutual expressions of surprise and joy, and were soon convinced of each other's fidelity.

The Lady Abbess now came forward, and ordered the young stranger to attend her in the parlour of the convent, and Amanda was then bid to retire with Heloisa.

When Di Salvo demanded by whose authority Amanda was placed under the care of the Abbess, and was informed it was indeed his mother, he could scarcely command sufficient temper to listen patiently to a long discourse on the goodness of the Marchioness di Salvo, and a defence of the steps she had taken to save her illustrious family from disgrace. But when he was told that Amanda would not be released from the convent, without an order from the Marchioness, and unless that order was received within so many days, she would have to undergo the severe punishments her rejection of the vows had subjected her to, his fury and contempt of her threats rose to its zenith. To his keen reproaches for her severe conduct, she only answered him by severer menaces and denunciations.

She at last ordered him to retire from her presence, and he was compelled to quit her apartment, and to apply to the Father Abbot, but he being timid, refused to intermeddle with the affairs of the Abbess. What was he to do? In short, there appeared no other re-

source or alternative left for him, but that which he detested, namely—stratagem.

He now began to think of the best plan for her escape, and for the accomplishment of which, he and his servant, Bardo, began to make arrangements, and however delicacy might object to the imprudent steps, to Amanda there existed no other prospect of escape, but through the medium of Di Salvo; and even that hope was nipped almost as soon as formed.

Amanda was conducted back to her cell, and strict orders given to Heloisa, to keep her closely watched and guarded. In the evening she waited with extreme anxiety for the visit of Heloisa, who, when she came, informed her of the departure of Di Salvo—of his interview with the Abbess—and that he had not been able to succeed in obtaining her release from the convent. That she had treated him in the most haughty manner, with threats and denunciations; and had said, that if he was seen near the convent again, the utmost rigour of the laws should be inflicted upon him.

Amanda eased her heart at this sad intelligence, by a flood of tears. Heloisa was much affected, and most feelingly did she sympathize with her in her distress. She tried to give every comfort and consolation in her power, and even suggested the idea, that Di Salvo would attempt an escape for her, if possible.

So much sympathy even excited the surprise and gratitude of Amanda; and as her friend bade her adieu for a short time, she thanked her for the kind interest and feeling she evinced on her account.

When Heloisa was gone, Amanda hastened to her



turret, (for the Nun, though ordered to see that she was closely locked up, would not deprive her of that small enjoyment) to endeavour to divert her mind from dwelling too much upon the late events. She amused herself alternately until the twilight approached, with reading and drawing. As the shadows of evening approached, and she sat with her head reclined on her hand, thoughtfully listening to the wild music of the mountainous foliage; she thought she heard music of a very different kind. It gradually approached nearer, till it arrived so near the rock, that she could distinctly hear a reed so sweetly sounded, and it played an air so familiar to her ear, and in such an expressive manner, that in a transport of joy, she exclaimed—

“The musician must be Di Salvo.”

She took up her lute, and seating herself inside the balcony, endeavoured by the moon beams which now and then emerging from behind a cloud, threw a light on the surrounding rocks, to discover the person, who she felt assured, could not be far off.

She had waited there some time, attentively and anxiously watching every object, till again she heard the music; when looking to that part of the rocks whence the sounds proceeded, she could distinctly perceive a person standing on the brow of an almost inaccessible cliff below.

Again she heard the music, and again the well remembered air sounded sweetly to her ear. She now waited until it ceased, then touching the chords of her lute, she responded the same air to the following very beautiful lines.



## GLOOMY ANTICIPATIONS.

Deep buried in the shades of night,  
Our future fates remain ;  
And fearful Fancy's doubtful light  
Discovers nought but pain.

The heavy cloud which now o'erspreads  
A prospect once so fair,  
May burst on our devoted heads,  
And spend its fury there.

Yes, it may be our lot to bear  
Each varied form of woe ;  
And hopeless sorrow's silent tear,  
May never cease to flow.

E'er long this dire suspense must end,  
But Oh! if doom'd to part,  
Death only can my woes befriend,  
And heal a wounded heart.

The figure instantly answered the signal, and convinced Amanda it was indeed Di Salvo. He soon found means to ascend a nearer projection of the cliff; and here it was that the lovers arranged a plan for escape; but the means were principally affected by Bardo. He had learned from one of the lay brothers, that Amanda sometimes fre-

quented this remote turret; and at the hazard of his life, he had now ventured to climb the brow of the cliff, with a hope, if he could by this pipe let her know it was himself, of conversing with her.

Amanda, alarmed at his tremendous situation, begged he would immediately descend, but he refused to do so until he had communicated a plan concerted for her escape; and entreating that she would confide herself to his care. He told her that one of the Brothers had consented to admit him within the walls, on the following evening, it being a holiday; when, in his pilgrim's habit, he might have an opportunity of again seeing her. He conjured her to attend, if possible, in the parlour of the convent during supper. He then bade her good night, as it was becoming dark, and would on that account be dangerous for him to descend the cliff.

One of the holidays of the convent was to be on that evening, and the Brother had informed him that Amanda must have a friend inside, or she would not enjoy the privilege of visiting that turret. He had promised to admit Di Salvo in his habit, on this night, which the Lady Abbess was to give a grand collation to the Father Abbot and the Priests. A few strangers of distinction were to be admitted, and the Nuns were to perform a grand concert. The entertainments were to be conducted chiefly in the outer apartments, while the Abbess with her select friends, had a table sumptuously spread in an inner room. Amanda had woven a silken cord from the work-box Heloise had supplied her with, and with this she contrived to fasten her handkerchief tied up in a ball, containing a few lines, to Di Salvo, and entreating him,

if he had any hopes of planning her escape, to let her know, by returning an answer the following evening. This little ball she managed to throw over the opposite wall, when she was convinced he was watching for her signal.

Di Salvo, therefore, relying on security in the pilgrim's habit, soon reached the spot where he had seen Amanda throw the parcel, and easily made himself master of its contents. He did not fail immediately to send her an answer by the same conveyance; wherein he conjured her, as she valued her liberty and his affection, not to fail meeting him at the appointed time and place, when he would have a letter ready for her, to explain the plan formed for her escape, should any obstacle prevent his speaking to her. As he stood on the cliff, he saw her receive his parcel, when having lingered on the rock, until the darkness which was gathering all around, made it dangerous for him to descend, they waved their handkerchiefs and bid each other adieu for the present. Amanda returned to her cell, to read his letter and to contemplate the intended plan for her escape. She had read the contents of his letter, and was meditating upon the possibility of seeing him, when she was interrupted by the entrance of Heloise, whose foreboding and melancholy countenance excited her immediate alarm.

Amanda anxiously enquired what news she brought.

"Sad indeed!" was the reply. "Your late conduct in the chapel is to be punished with imprisonment in the stone chamber of the convent; the place of terror and of death; assigned for the sisters guilty of any heinous offence. There the unfortunate sufferer never receives a

reprieve, but languishes on bread and water, until life sinks under the gloomy pressure. It is called the chamber of death! One instance of this dreadful rigour has occurred within my memory. The poor wretched victim languished during two years on her bed of straw, and now lies buried and at rest in the convent garden. To-morrow is the day appointed for your sacrifice, which, but for the festival of this evening, would ere now have been carried into execution!"

Amanda, shuddering, could only reply by uttering a deep groan.

"I do indeed sympathize with you," said Heloisa, "and if we could plan some mode of escape for you, you shall have my utmost assistance; and I will most willingly undertake to share the malevolence of the Lady Abbess, with you," said Heloisa, "if the plans we adopt are discovered. Come, my love, cheer up a little, the festivities of this evening encourage the idea that we may succeed. You shall never be immured within those gloomy, terrific walls, if Heloisa can prevent it."

Amanda embraced her friend with feelings of the most lively gratitude, and encouraged by such exalted conduct, she laid open to Heloisa the plan Di Salvo had in part suggested, and which she said she had received that evening.

Heloisa's countenance brightened at this information, and seizing the hand of Amanda, she said, emphatically—

"May the holy saint guard you, and grant that success may attend the attempt. I will go immediately, and procure a nun's veil, under which there will be no

fear of detection. I will conduct you to the place, where, mingling with the other Sisters, you may see, and probably be enabled to speak to him, without being perceived. In the mean time, while I go for the veil, let me advise you to write a few lines to Di Salvo, stating every particular attending your perilous situation. Tell him you have a friend inside the walls of the convent, who will do everything in her power to assist in your escape. If you are not able to speak to him, you may perhaps have an opportunity of giving him a letter unobserved. Tell him, also, if his plan should fail, you will try to be at the north door of the convent garden, when the first mattin bell rings."

A loud chime now sounding to summons the Nun to the concert room, the friends were obliged to part, as Heloise dared not be absent when the Lady Abbess should enter, to choose the first performers. They then separated.



## CHAPTER X.

My wayward lot of life has been,  
To see th' extremes of every scene;  
In joy and grief, in good and ill.

As soon as her friend, Heloisa, was gone, Amanda sat down to write a few lines to Di Salvo; after which, she ascended to the turret chamber, to learn, if possible, if he was near, but she could not either see or hear anything of him. She then descended to her cell, where she discovered that Heloisa had been, and left the dress and veil for her on the table; also a small note to say, she had better put them on, and join the party. The note also informed her that she would find a small key tied to the corner of the veil, which would open the door at the end of the passage, through which she might pass undisturbed: and again bid her remember the signal by which they were to know each other. Amanda immediately dressed herself in the Nun's habit and veil, and descended to the music room, mingled with the Nuns who were already assembled within the grate. On the outside, with the monks and pilgrims, were seen several strangers, in the usual dress of their country: but she

could not see any one who bore the least resemblance to Di Salvo. It struck her, that if he were present, her nun's veil would as effectually conceal her from him, as it would from the Lady Abbess. It therefore became absolutely necessary to withdraw it for a few moments at the grate, though aware that this expedient must expose her to the observation of strangers.

The murmuring of voices, and the bustle which now prevailed, announced the approach of the Lady Abbess. Amanda's heart throbbed as she entered, and drawing on one side, she passed on, followed by her train. She stopt for a short time at the entrance of the music room, and conversed with the Father Abbot, who then conducted her to her chair of state, and withdrew to the other side of the apartment. The performance was then opened with one of the most sublime and impressive airs, and which almost entranced Amanda, and rescued her thoughts, for a few moments, from a sense of her dangerous situation. However, recovering herself, she began to look around; not only to view the grandeur of the scene, but also to look into the other apartments, and watch for Di Salvo. She entered a vaulted apartment, lighted by innumerable tapers, where there was assembled about fifty nuns, who, in the dress of their order, appeared in graceful plainness; their beauty and delicacy of deportment were highly contrasted by the austere majesty of the Lady Abbess, who was seated in an elevated chair of state, covered with crimson velvet, bordered with gold lace; her dress was costly in the extreme; and being seated separate from the rest, she did appear the impress of the scene. Near the Holy



Father, who, and his attendant monks, dressed in the habit of their order, arranged without the screen of wire work, were placed the strangers of distinction; some in rich Neapolitan habits; whose elegance and gay colouring, were well opposed to the dark drapery of the ecclesiastics. In the back ground stood several pilgrims, whose looks were less cheerful and more sedate, than when on the road the preceding day. Amanda looked often towards this part of the chamber, but could not see Di Salvo, and though she had placed herself near the grate, she had not, as yet, had sufficient resolution before so many strangers, to withdraw her veil.

At the conclusion of the piece of music, he not having been observed by Amanda, she retired to the apartment where a collation was spread for the Abbess and her guests, who soon after made their appearance. She staid there but a short time.

After wandering from one apartment to the other, and looking earnestly at every one she thought likely to be him, she began to despair; when on turning towards the grate again, her attention was strongly excited by perceiving that a stranger, dressed in the habit of a pilgrim, with his face partly concealed, and wrapped in the folds of his cloak, and who appeared rather to be a spectator, than a partaker in the entertainment, stood near the grate.

The Abbess being engaged in earnest conversation with the ladies who surrounded her, gave Amanda an opportunity of securely approaching the place where the stranger stood, and whom she really thought, and sincerely hoped, might be Di Salvo. Having reached the spot

opposite the grate where the stranger stood ; she tremblingly ventured for an instant to hold up her veil.

The person, uncovering his face, graciously thanked her for her condescension, and she saw it was not Di Salvo. Greatly disappointed, she was about to retire hastily, when the quick and hurried steps of another stranger approached, who on drawing aside his cloak, she discovered with the utmost joy was Di Salvo.

Amanda, perceiving from the signs he gave her, that she was known, did not again raise her veil, but advanced a few steps towards the grate, where Di Salvo had placed a paper for her ; but before she could get near enough to speak to him, he had retired among the crowd. She could not, therefore, present her own letter to him. In her hurry to secure the letter he had placed for her, she dropped it, and a nun quickly approaching the spot, just at the same moment, wafted the paper from the place where it lay, and trod upon it. On seeing the letter under the Nun's foot, the apprehensions and agitation of Amanda were disguised with the greatest difficulty. She was, however, soon released from her distress, by the Sister gently pushing the letter towards her without examining it. Amanda immediately put her foot upon it, but imagining she was perceived, did not dare to touch it then. Besides, whenever she offered to look round, she fancied the eyes of the Abbess seemed directed towards her. She stood in the greatest suspense for some time, not being able to summon courage sufficient to stoop down and pick up the letter.

At last, the collation being ended, and the assembly beginning to adjourn, she hastily picked up the letter,

and secured it in the folds of her dress, scarcely daring to enquire by a quick glance, whether any one had noticed her conduct. She once more ventured towards the grate, but could not again see any one like Di Salvo. She would now have instantly retired to peruse the contents of the letter, but the Lady Abbess left the room, and on looking round for Heloisa, she perceived the train of nuns had left the apartment also.

It now behoved her to follow also in the Abbess's train, and as she advanced, she thought she discovered Heloisa, and giving her the signal, as agreed, and which she answered, she passed on to her cell. Having arrived there without any interruption, she sat down to read Di Salvo's letter; when in her haste in turning over the paper, the lamp dropt from her hand, and was instantly extinguished.

Her distress now became almost insupportable. What could she do? It was totally impossible for her to venture forth for a light, as that would have betrayed the secret that she was no longer a prisoner, consequently she would have been more closely confined, and Heloisa must have suffered from a discovery of the liberty and indulgence she had granted her. In a state of mind almost bordering upon distraction, she paced her room to and fro, in the dark, and then sat down, almost the victim of despair, to listen if she could hear approaching footsteps. Her whole dependence now rested on the arrival of Heloisa, ere it was too late, perhaps, to practise Di Salvo's instructions. Often did she turn about the eventful paper, conscious of having in her hand the information, on a true knowledge of which, perhaps her

escape, nay even her very existence depended. She could feel the paper, without the means of being able to get at, or understand its contents.

She now recollected that Heloisa had bid her write Di Salvo word that she would be at the north door of the garden, either at twelve or four; it was now past twelve, therefore she was fearful it would be four o'clock before she should see Heloisa. After waiting for a considerable time in the most agonizing suspense, she heard approaching footsteps, and presently after Heloisa appeared with her lamp in her hand, coming along the passage. Amanda joyfully welcomed her friend, who informed her that she had not been able to leave to come to her sooner. Amanda took the lamp carefully, and quickly perused Di Salvo's letter. The contents were to inform her that Brother Carlo was waiting without the upper gate of the garden, to conduct her to Di Salvo, who was waiting to convey her to some place of safety, or wherever she thought proper to go.

Amanda, greatly agitated, gave the paper to Heloisa, desiring her to read, and advise her how to proceed. An hour and a half had now elapsed, and Di Salvo's letter expressed that success depended on the utmost expedition, and being punctual to the time appointed by Brother Carlo.

The kind Heloisa having read the letter, declared she was most willing to brave every danger to effect her deliverance. After a short pause, Heloisa said—

“In every avenue of the convent we are sure to meet some of the nuns, who are not yet retired from the festivities of the last evening; but as my veil has hitherto

protected you from danger or detection, I trust it will still assist your purpose. But I must inform you, it will be necessary we should pass through the refectory, where the sisters who did not partake of the collation, are met at supper, and will continue there, till they are summoned to the chapel by the matin bell. If we stay till then, I apprehend it will be of no use to go at all."

On hearing this, Amanda entreated that not another moment, if possible, might be lost. Therefore, to ease her friend's mind, and convince her of the sincerity of her wish to save her, Heloisa consented to risk all danger; then equipping themselves, they instantly quitted the cell.

As they slowly descended to the refectory, several sisters passed them, but did not seem particularly to notice them. The Abbess who had been overlooking the nuns at supper, and not seeing Heloisa, had enquired for her; she now met them at the door. Amanda was almost ready to drop with fright. As her face was turned a little towards one of the nuns who had accompanied her to the door, she fortunately did not see Amanda, who had just time to retreat behind one of the niches in the wall, while the Superior passed. But Heloisa was obliged to stay and answer her questions. After which, unveiling herself, she was permitted to proceed. As soon as the Lady Abbess was out of sight, Amanda having joined her friend, they passed through the refectory and escaped detection. They now proceeded hastily along the passage, and through an opposite door; when, as they were opening a gate that led into the garden, they were stopped by a Nun, who enquired if they had heard th

mattin bell, seeing they were proceeding towards the chapel.

Heloisa very prudently answered these questions, and they were permitted to pass on. They now hurried forward, as quick as their trembling limbs would allow them, to the garden gate; when Heloisa thought it would be prudent to ascertain who, or if any person was without the gate, and to receive an answer to the signal which Di Salvo had proposed, ere they made themselves known. She then struck upon the wood, and immediately voices were heard from without, but no reply was made to the Nun's signal.

"We are betrayed," said Amanda, in a low voice, "but I will know the worst at once: when repeating the signal, it was answered by three taps upon the gate. A key was now heard to grate in the lock, and instantly the gate opened, and two persons presented themselves, closely muffled up in their cloaks. Amanda felt frightened, and retreated a little behind the door, when a well-known voice soon recalled her, and she saw Di Salvo by the light of a half-hooded lamp which Carlo held; and throwing herself into his arms, she faintly ejaculated—

"Is it indeed you?"

"Oh heavens," he exclaimed, "is it possible I thus again embrace you? that you are indeed my Amanda—my own? Oh if you could but know what I have endured on your account the last hour!"

Then observing Heloisa he drew back a little, till Amanda recovering herself, took hold of the hand of Heloisa, and presenting her to Di Salvo, informed him

she was her best friend, who had so generously, and at all hazards and danger, so willingly assisted in her escape. Di Salvo was thanking her in the best way he knew how, for the great obligations they both felt indebted to her for; when he was interrupted by his companion, Carlo, who suddenly uttered—

“Come, Signor; we have no more time to loose; we have tarried too long already, as you will find probably.”

“Farewell, my dear friend,” said Heloisa, weeping on her bosom.

“Farewell, my tender, dearest friend,” she replied “Remember the convent Della Martino.”

“You ought to have settled that business within,” said Cardo, gruffly. “We have been waiting nearly two hours already for you.”

As Di Salvo gently disengaged Amanda from the Nun, he said—

“Ah, do I then only hold the second place in your heart?”

She looked at him tenderly, and giving him her hand, she said—

“Do I not owe this moment’s release and happiness to her?”

He pressed her hand fervently to his heart. They then bade Heloisa once more adieu, and quitted the gate. They now hurried forward.

“As it is moonlight,” said Di Salvo, “I think your lamp is of no use, and may betray us.”

“Signor,” replied Carlo, “we shall find it of great service in the church and in many of the avenues we shall



have to pass through; for I dare not now, it is so late, lead you through the gates.

"Lead on, then," said Di Salvo; and they had already nearly reached the cypress walk that extended to the church. As they entered the gloomy path, Di Salvo expressed some apprehension. He was sure none of the brothers would be so stupid as to come and strike in their way.

"Walk on a festival, Signor!" said Carlo. "They are too heavily by this time to be resting from the enjoyments of last night."

Di Salvo wished much to avoid the church, but the Father assured him it was utterly impossible, as he now feared the matten bell would ring before he had conducted them out of the reach of danger and detection. If they went the other way they should be sure to meet the brothers on their way to attend vespers.

They had now reached the church, and on entering, they unhooded the lamp, for all the tapers at the shrines had expired, and none were left except at the high altar. They proceeded rapidly through the church, into a small room, and crossed to a side door that communicated with the rock, which enshrined the image of our lady of Mount Carmel.

A sudden glare of light from the end of the cave, as they entered, as from a number of tapers, greatly alarmed the fugitives. Carlo advancing a little, to ascertain from what cause the light proceeded, instantly returned, and assured them there was no person within; but that the light they saw, proceeded from tapers which were always burning around the shrine. A little recovered from their alarm, by this explanation, they followed into the cave.

at the farthest end of which, appeared a small door, and on Carlo's opening it, they entered a narrow winding dark passage. Di Salvo stopped, and enquired whither the father was leading them.

"To the place of your *destination*," replied Carlo.

This was an answer that displeased and did not satisfy Di Salvo.

"To the place of our destination!" he repeated. "If your purpose is evil," he said, "pause an instant, or your life shall answer for your treachery."

The Friar's countenance darkening at this speech, he replied—

"Of what service would my death be to you? Are you not aware that every brother in our society would rise to revenge it?"

"I know this much," replied Di Salvo, "that I will make sure of one traitor, if there be one, and since you now know this, proceed onward immediately."

They then followed quickly through the windings of this gloomy passage, but ere they had reached its extremity, they distinctly heard music.

Amanda eagerly enquired whence those sounds proceeded.

The brother informed them, from the cave they had just passed through. "Had you kept us one quarter of an hour longer, Lady, I could not have ensured you a passport through this passage; and to have attempted the other way, would have been attended with still greater danger."

Amanda briefly explained the cause of the delay, and the father seemed satisfied.

"It is now past midnight," said Carlo. "You must quicken your pace, as I expect every moment to be summoned to the church."

While they hastily advanced, the matten bell solemnly struck, and sounded through the vaulted passage its lengthened peal.

"That is the summons for me to attend," uttered Carlo.

They now passed on with the utmost speed, till arriving at a door that was standing a little way open, and which afforded them an opportunity of taking a glimpse of a gloomy chamber which was faintly lighted, Di Salvo being rather alarmed at the light, enquired if any person was in the room.

Carlo, pretended not to hear him, and was stepping onward; but on the question being repeated, he gave an equivocal answer, and pointed to an arched gate, that terminated the avenue.

"This is as far as I can now conduct you," said he feeling for the key; I think you will proceed onward now without molestation, the road is straight before you."

They thanked him, and he had applied the key to the hole, with the intention of unlocking the gate, when it refused to yield, even to their united efforts.

"How is this?" said Di Salvo.

A pause ensued.

"I fear we are betrayed," said the Brother, coolly; the second lock is shut, and I have only the key to the first."

Di Salvo now in a resolute tone replied—

We are indeed betrayed, and I too plainly perceive by whom : but tremble at my vengeance, and consider whether it is your interest now to interrupt us."

"I do most solemnly swear, by our most holy saint" said Carlo, "that I am totally ignorant how this affair could have happened. I greatly fear that whatever has passed now, has been led hither by some suspicion of your flight. I left it fastened by one lock only when I came to you." Di Salvo, now enraged to the highest pitch, and greatly alarmed at the interruption to their progress, replied to the father—

"Either unclose the gate this instant, or prepare for the worst."

Amanda, as well as her agitation and fears would permit her, endeavoured to calm the indignation of Di Salvo, and to persuade Carlo to try to open the gate. The old man replied—

"Lady, this interruption is as likely to prove fatal to me as to you? am I not absent from my duty? shall I not be called upon to answer for my conduct?"

They again exerted their utmost efforts to force open the gate, but it was immoveable.

Carlo now said he did not despair of effecting their escape, but they would be compelled to remain in the avenue all night and perhaps the next day. He then promised he would return, and either bring the double keys, or something to force the gate open. As there now seemed no other alternative, it was determined that Carlo should conduct them back to the chamber they had seen lighted, and where he told them they might

rest securely until his return. He then left them with a promise to return as quick as possible.



## CHAPTER XI.

If right I judge, to mourn, to mourn,  
Will be my lot, for joys estranged,  
For tenderest pleasures sadly changed,  
For blighted hopes, vain or deceived,  
For thoughts too readily believed.

It was after eight o'clock at night when Lauretta returned, accompanied by the old Jewess. She was privately shewn into a secret apartment, which was faintly lighted. Lauretta then went to inform her mistress.

After some little preparation and hesitation to meet the sorceress, the Dutchess entered the apartment accompanied by Lauretta. She was ready to recoil with terror, at a short figure bending on a stick of black-thorn; dressed in a red gown which was fastened with a yellow girdle, who now stepped forward a few paces to meet her. On the head of the sorceress which kept continually shaking, an old hood drawn forward, scarcely concealed a few grey hairs. A pointed bone, covered with a dry skin, which formerly was a nose, nearly joined a similar bone which served as a chin.

Her keen though bloodshot eyes were surrounded with eye-brows of straggling white hairs, two wrinkled cavities marked the spots which were once her cheeks. The Dutchess having a little recovered from her fright, desired the old woman to be seated, and not wishing to disguise anything from her, she thus began:—"In the first place I must inform you I love my husband, and at these words a flood of tears gushed from her eyes. "I have been beloved by him—yes, I am sure he once loved me; now he has forsaken me. He quits his home for vile and despicable objects who are unworthy of him. 'Tis seldom ever now that I see him, and when I do he takes no notice of me. If you can bring him back to love his home; if you can restore him to me, such as he was in the days of my bliss; my purse, my jewels, and all that I possess, shall be yours."

After a few moments silence, and a few more hem's and coughs, and standing up and then leaning on her stick—

"Madam," said she, in a rough hoarse voice, "I have philtres of which the effect is infallible in bringing back wandering lovers; but I do not know of any, strong enough to bring back profligate and abandoned husbands. I was, however, applied to last winter, by a young and lively princess, who was in the same situation with yourself. Her husband was enamoured of a Roman singer, who, very unlike you, was ordinary enough in person, and also declining in years. I tried two of my love potions in vain. Astonished at my bad success, I began to suspect that the singer herself dealt

in magic, and that she counteracted my charms by others which destroyed their effect. Plagued, then, by that spirit of rivalry which is the inspirer of talent, I contrived to procure admission into the house of this celebrated singer; I immediately ascended to the garret; it was secured by three locks. You may judge that I had no need of keys to open them. When I entered the room, I soon perceived what it was that had rendered my philteries of no avail; in one corner of the chamber I saw a handsome cock, chained by the neck, the wings, and the legs. The cock had on both his eyes leather shades, which entirely prevented him from seeing. I laughed with contempt. I seized the cock, and contented myself with taking off the shades. Quite satisfied that all my wishes would be fulfilled, I then returned home.

In fact, to be brief; the moment that the cock ceased to be blind, the husband of the young princess, ceased to be so with respect to the charms of the singer. He saw her as she really was; ugly, old, and wicked; and knowing also, that his wife was young, faithful, and charming, he became more fond of her than ever.

But the cure which we have now to perform, is far more difficult. You cannot point out any particular woman who has your husband's affections. Several share it, and my enchantments thus divided, would assuredly lose their strength. Let us, however, not despair; I am mistress of a terrible secret; and if I could obtain the locks, cut by yourself, from the head of a criminal who died on the gibbet, I should be sure of making you loved for your whole life, by him whom you adore."



The Duchess shuddered at these words, and dismissed the Sorceress; but she had no sooner quitted the room, than she repented, and Lauretta hastened to recal her. Driven to desperation, Rosalba, after having exhausted her offers and entreaties to find other means; and conquered at last by the pertinacity of the old hag, who persisted in repeating that this means alone was certain.

Rosalba ended by enquiring how these terrible locks were to be procured.

"Listen to me," said the Sorceress. "One league and a half from the town of Palermo, on the road to Conliore, is a small chapel, surrounded by a deep ditch. A wooden bridge leads to this chapel, and round the outside runs a ledge of stone, about six inches wide. Above this ledge are suspended the bodies of the criminals who are executed at Palermo. They continue there as a warning to others till they fall off into the ditch, which serves as a sepulchre for their remains. If you have courage enough, or rather, love enough to go to this chapel alone, and cut off with your left hand the locks of the first corpse you meet with, I will answer for the rest. But no one must accompany you; it is necessary that you should be alone, and that it should be at the hour of midnight."

Rosalba reflected for a few moments, then seizing the hand of the old Jewess, and strongly pressing it, she exclaimed—

"I will go."

The clock struck ten. Rosalba determined to make the attempt immediately. She called for her veil, and Lauretta, trembling, gave it her. She furnished herself

with a dark lantern, a pair of scissors, and a dagger; ordered the Sorceress to wait her return; forbade Lauretta to follow her; and then quitted the palace by the garden gate. She then hastened out of the city, took the road to Corlione, and was soon in the country entirely by herself, amidst the darkness of the night, walking forward with firm and rapid steps; her mind solely occupied with the idea of her husband.

She at last arrived; she saw the chapel; a trembling came over her; but still she resolved to proceed, and without stopping, she sought with her lantern how to unfasten the entrance to the wooden bridge. Having undone the fastening, she crossed it and pressed forward. When she came to the ledge of stone, she paused to examine it by the feeble light of her lantern.

This ledge was barely a foot in width, and was cut slooping towards the ditch. The Duchess turned the light to it, and looked down the precipice; she could plainly perceive whitened bones some yards below her. Almost ready to faint, Rosalba rallied her spirits, went round to the ascent, made an effort, and placed her foot on the narrow ledge. At the second step she tottered. Her first impulse naturally was to stretch out her hand to support herself by the wall; and in doing so, her hand met the leg of one of the suspended corpses. She seized and held it fast; passed her lantern from her left hand to her right, while she held the leg; took out her scissors from her bosom, and stretching on her insecurely fixed feet, to raise herself on tiptoe, she endeavoured to reach the head of the corpse, that she might obtain the locks which she wanted.

While she was in the midst of this horrible and dangerous occupation, a chariot with six horses passed rapidly along the high road. In this carriage was a young man who was conducting two Opera Singers to his residence. All on a sudden the chariot stopped; and by the twinkling of the lamp she held, he observed from the carriage window a female, who seemed to be trying to take down the body of one of the wretched criminals. Struck with horror and affright, he took the female to be some sorceress, who was performing some magical operation, by stealing one of the corpses. He rushed from the carriage, determined to know the fact, and who she was, and telling one of the servants to follow him. Although superstitious and debauched, yet he possessed great courage, and on coming near the spot, he exclaimed with a thundering voice—

“Infamous wretch, leave the dead in peace, or fear the living. Tremble and desist, lest I instantly drag you from your prey, and deliver you into the hand of the Inquisition.”

’Tis impossible to describe what were the feelings of the Duchess on hearing these words. It was the voice of her husband! she knew him! and in her surprise and terror, she dropped the lantern, which immediately rolled down the precipice, went out, and left the terrified Rosalba in utter darkness, suspended to the corpse, trembling, scarcely breathing, and aware that her little remaining strength was quickly deserting her. The Duke now redoubled his threats. On seeing her lamp fall, he had dispatched his servant to fetch one from

the carriage, who now returned, and they were already crossing the bridge. Compelled at length to speak, the nearly fainting Rosalba, as loud as she was able, cried to him,

"God and my heart bear me witness that I meditate no crime. Do not revile me, an unfortunate being, who deserve only pity; but above all do not I entreat you, come near me unless you wish me instantly to throw myself into this horrible gulph."

She paused.

At these words, at that voice, the Duke knew his wife. He screamed, hurried towards her, uttered her name most tenderly and implored her to take courage, and to wait for him to assist her down. He even lavished the most tender expressions, which were forced from him by the danger of her situation. At length he reached the spot where she was, when seizing her in his arms he carried her senseless to and placed her in his carriage, and turning out those who occupied it, he desired the coachman to drive back immediately to the city with all possible speed. He reached his palace before the duchess had recovered from the swoon into which she had been thrown.

Lauretta, when she saw her mistress lifeless in the arms of the Duke, filled the air with cries of grief. She tried to assist her master in restoring her to life; but her frame had received such a shock that it was feared she would be a long time, if ever she rightly recovered from it. The Duke was almost frantic; he could scarcely believe what he had that night witnessed, and strove in vain to comprehend why he had found the Duchess

in such a horrible situation. At last he requested of Lauretta an explanation. When calling in the old Jewess, she with an awful gravity thus addressed him in these words :

“ Insensible and cruel man, instantly fall on your knees, before your wife, and confess your faults. Amend ; and from this very moment cherish and adore that model of affection and constant heart. Never did lover, never did husband, receive a stronger, a warmer, or a greater proof of affection and love, than that which you have this very night received. Learn, ingrate ; learn what your faithful Rosalba has done, has encountered, has suffered for you. Blush and confess that you are ashamed, that you are sorry for having reduced her to make such a trial to regain your affection and tender protection ; and employ, I charge you, the future period of your life, in trying, by gratitude, affectionate kindness, and tender love, to pay the debt you have this night contracted.”

The Jewess then recounted to him the exact conversation she had with the Duchess, and the terrible proof she had required from her.

The Duke did not wait till the old woman had finished her story ; he threw himself at the feet of his injured wife, and shed tears of admiration, tenderness, and repentance. He vowed most solemnly to atone by an eternal constancy, for that misconduct which he now abhorred. He entreated her pardon, and confessed he was unworthy of it.

The tender Rosalba, a little revived by his tender caresses, raised him up with a melancholy smile ; pressed

him fondly to her heart; bathed his face with her tears of joy and rapture; and both at once pouring out their grateful acknowledgements, they mutually thanked each other for the happiness they fondly hoped they were henceforth to enjoy.

From this moment the Duke abandoned his false friends and acquaintance, who had not been able entirely to corrupt his heart. Happy in a felicity which he had not before known; that which is obtained by pure love and a heart at peace with itself; the Duke of Castelamore, daily more attached to and beloved by his faithful Rosalba, passed his days, (the few that were allotted him) serenely and peacefully with his affectionate wife, their little one, and the good old Count, her father.

The old Sorceress, enriched by the gifts which the Duchess bestowed on her, followed her advice, and relinquished her dangerous profession. She has since confessed that when she proposed to the Duchess to visit the chapel, she knew that the Duke always passed by it at midnight, and hoped he might do so that night. She perhaps reckoned upon this meeting, but this circumstance does not diminish the glory of her success, nor ought it in the least to lessen that faith which is due to the wonderful power of magicians.

The Duke, naturally of a delicate constitution, had so weakened it by the abandoned and profligate life he had led, that in a few months after this event he became ill, and began to shew symptoms of approaching decline; and although the best medical advice and change of climate were resorted to; yet little hopes were entertained

of his recovery. The good old Count Scangaro, too, from age and infirmity was fast declining.

Just at this period, the lady Janetia came to pay a visit to her friend. We will leave her to condole with her in her affliction, while we return to enquire after Di Salvo and Amanda.



## CHAPTER XII.

Father and friend, farewell !  
In each storm-troubled moment, may  
A sweet and peace-compelling calm—  
O ever thus—till life's latest day attend thee.

For a considerable time after the departure of Carlo, Di Salvo and Amanda were not without hope. But the idea forcing itself upon their minds, that he would not return and open the gate, made their situation become terrible. At one time Di Salvo resolved to go and seek him; but as the time was not yet expired, when he had promised to return, Amanda entreated him to wait till then, and not leave her: for as he had said they must probably stay there all the next day, perhaps he could not return until the evening, she felt afraid of being left alone.



The description which Heloisa had given of the stone chamber; the prison where the unfortunate Nun had languished and expired, exactly corresponded with this one they were now in. The cold, damp, earthly air, was like that of a sepulchre. The furniture consisted only of a table, a low bench, and a lamp, the one which was lighted, and which but dimly shewed the gloomy wretchedness of the apartment. Amanda frequently looked round the room in search of some object which might contradict or confirm her suspicions that this was the death chamber of the unhappy nun.

At length, in a remote corner of the room, she perceived a mattress of straw; no doubt, thought she, where the Nun expired. And while this idea came across her mind, she became pale as death, and gazed wildly at that part of the chamber.

While Di Salvo requested she would explain the horror she betrayed, they distinctly heard a hollow sigh near them. Amanda started and clung to Di Salvo. Presently all was quiet and still again. Amanda now began to relate what Heloisa had informed her relative to this chamber, when another deep hollow sigh interrupted her. Di Salvo then took up the lamp, and stepping forward, exclaimed—

“If you are in distress or sorrow, whoever you are, speak; from fellow sufferers you will meet with sympathy; but if your designs are evil, come forward and tremble, for you shall find me desperate.”

They waited a shorttime in the most anxious suspense, still no answer was returned. Amanda here observed, that she wondered why that lamp had been burning

there; it struck her, on purpose for them in this horrid chamber; "or perhaps," said she, "this awful room is still the abode, with the one beyond it, of some poor wretched victim; for look, I see another low door, just in that corner there."

Di Salvo again took the lamp, and proceeded to the opposite side of the room, where he saw there was a small low door in the rock; he immediately set down the lamp to examine it, when he heard a plaintive, low sound, as of some person at prayer; he looked for the fastening, and on gently opening the door, he perceived a figure in the attitude of kneeling before the crucifix. Di Salvo paused, and waited till the figure rose from his supplicating posture, when he discovered the silver temples and palid features of an aged Monk. On his entering the apartment, an unaffected surprise appeared in the countenance of the father, and who wildly articulated—

"Whence art thou, my son? what fatality has brought thee hither?"

But Di Salvo at first feared to answer his questions, till the father hinted to him, that an explanation was necessary, even to his own safety. Encouraged by the piety of his manner, and the seeming sanctity of his sacred character, Di Salvo confided to the Friar, a circumstantial but brief account of his embarrassment and distressing situation; and on telling them how long the Monk, Carlo, had been absent, and stating that the gate of the avenue was secured by a double lock, he fearfully replied—

"My children, you are indeed betrayed! He has brought you here for the diabolical purpose of securing both of you."

This intelligence quite overwhelmed the already sinking frame of Amanda with redoubled fears.

The Friar, addressing her, observed, that he recollected having seen her in the church, "and," said he, "I remember, too, that you protested against the vows you were brought thither to seal. Were you aware of the consequences of such a rash step?"

"I had only a choice of evils, holy Father," replied Amanda, timidly.

Di Salvo endeavoured to soothe her agitation, and they most earnestly entreated the Friar to employ the critical moments that were left, to save them, ere it was too late.

After a short deliberation he yielded to their entreaties.

"Poor innocent," said the Friar, half to himself, "in this chamber—in this fatal place!"

"In this horrid chamber!" exclaimed Amanda, anticipating his meaning; it was, then, in this awful chamber, that a nun was suffered to perish, and I have no doubt, been conducted here to undergo a similar fate."

Di Salvo now endeavoured to sooth the mind of Amanda, which was now become dreadfully agitated; and again urged the Father to employ the present critical moment to save her.

"Oh heaven!" said he, "if she is now discovered, her fate is certain."

"I dare not say what that fate would be" interrupted

the Friar, "or what my own, should it be known I had consented to assist you; but though I am old, I can feel for others. They may oppress the few remaining years of my age. But come, follow me to the gate; we will see whether my key cannot unfasten all the locks that hold it."

On again arriving at the arched gate, the good old man took a key from his pocket, which on applying to the lock, it immediately gave way, and the gate flew open. They entered a narrow passage. The Father then informed them, the passage would terminate in a winding path, which would ultimately bring them to the foot of the mountains; they must then choose their own route. They had both fallen on their knees to receive his benediction; but scarcely did he give them time to speak their thanks, ere he laid his hands on them, and bidding them instantly speed on their way, he closed the gate and disappeared.

They arose and followed the path as the Friar had directed them, and ere the evening came on, they arrived at the foot of the mountain. Di Salvo then seated Amanda, while he took a short survey of the road they were to take. He soon discovered the right path. They then very cautiously descended among the cliffs, and Di Salvo soon discovered the place where he had the night before appointed Bardo to meet him with the horses.

This faithful servant was beginning to despair of ever seeing his master again, or of accomplishing the escape of his lovely mistress: when he thought he perceived some persons winding round the path of the mountain.





Venerable old Man came out and  
accepted to meet them.

see Page 451.

As they drew nearer, he was quite sure it was them; he leaped about for joy, and instantly set about spreading the refreshments he had prepared for them. As soon as they came up to the place where Bardo was waiting for them, he welcomed their approach with every demonstration of joy. They slightly partook of the repast, and then mounting their horses, they took a circuitous route towards Naples, as it was Amanda's intention to take refuge for the present, in the convent della Martino. They journeyed on, it being a beautiful moonlight night, without any interruption or meeting any one, until they came within sight of the Alpine bridge, on which they observed several people approaching towards them. These proved to be pilgrims going to visit the shrine, who after the usual salutations passed on.

Amanda suggested the idea, that if they were pursued, the pilgrims might give information of them. Therefore, as soon as they had crossed the bridge, fearing they might have to encounter fresh obstacles, they quitted the high road that led to Naples, and took the one that led to Aquila.

By the dawn of morning, they found themselves within sight of a shepherd's cabin; they quickly made up to it, and on entering the little path which led to the abode, a venerable old man came out, and advanced to meet them.

Amanda, quite overcome with fatigue, requested he would permit her to rest for a short time in his hut, to which he readily consented. Di Salvo assisted her to dismount, and they entered the cabin together.

The old man apologised for the poor accommodation,



then left them, to procure some milk, bread, honey, and dried figs for their breakfast, with which he quickly returned, and set before them with a hearty welcome.

They gladly partook of the repast, and Amanda thought it the most delicious food she had eaten in her life. The old man had taken care to have the horses put in an outer shed, and had given them some food also.

Bardo, whose curiosity and fear of pursuit, had led him forth to reconnoitre, suddenly returned, and apprised them that he had just seen two Carmelites, who greatly resembled those they had met near the bridge.

“Call our host, directly,” said Di Salvo. And on the good shepherd entering, he entreated those friars might not know what guests he had.

The old man seemed immediately to comprehend the reason, and readily assented. He instantly quitted the cabin to meet them, and to answer any enquiries that should be made.

Various were the conjectures of the party respecting the Carmelites, during the old man’s absence; and after waiting a considerable time in the utmost suspense, the shepherd returned, saying, that he could see nothing of them, that they had entirely escaped his vigilance, and he supposed they must have taken a different road from that which led to his cottage.

Di Salvo thanked him for the information; they then prepared to depart, and it was with the greatest difficulty when they took their leave of their kind host, that they could prevail upon him to accept any recompence for the trouble they had given him.

The shepherd then gave them the necessary directions

respecting the road they had best pursue, and they proceeded with all possible speed on their journey.

About noon, as they travelled onward, the beautiful lake of Celano with its vast circle of mountains, burst upon their view. Amanda was so delighted with the grandeur of the scenery, that the travellers stopped for a short time to admire the prospect, and to give their horses a little rest. Di Salvo pointed out to Amanda the lofty and gigantic Velino in the north, a barren mountain between Rome and Naples.

Feeling gratified and refreshed by the short rest they had taken, they journeyed on and reached the tower of Celero before the evening closed in. They put up at the first inn, and Di Salvo was requested by Amanda to enquire for a convent where she might pass the night in safety. He accordingly left her at the inn, accompanied with Bardo for her guard, and proceeded on his errand. Not many paces from the inn, he met a friar, who accosting him with the usual salutations of the evening; when making his enquiries, he informed him, that on the bank of the lake, about a quarter of a league off, there was a convent of the Urselines, remarkable for their hospitality to strangers.

Thanking the holy father for his kind information, Di Salvo instantly returned to the inn, and acquainting Amanda with his success, they set out immediately; passing through the town, which consisted of one straggling street, along the margin of the lake. In a very short time they arrived at a large pile of building, which Di Salvo judging to be the one they sought, enquired for the Urseline convent, and they were directed to its

gates. Bardo dismounted and rang the bell. The porter being made acquainted with their business, bade them ride into the open court, while he informed the lady Abbess. She very kindly received them, and bade Amanda welcome. She also directed Di Salvo to a neighbouring society of the Benedictines, where, at her recommendation, he also found a hospitable reception.

On the following morning he visited Amanda, and urged all his reasons and entreaties to prevail on her to consent to immediate solemnization of their nuptials. As among the brothers of the Benedictines he had little doubt of being enabled to prevail with one of them to perform the marriage ceremony. Di Salvo represented their present dangers, and claimed the promise of her hand.

She readily admitted the sacredness of the claim, and of the pledge which had been formerly given; and before he retired from the convent, he obtained her consent to consult with an aged Benedictine, whom he had engaged in his interest, at what hour the marriage might be solemnized with the least observation.

While Di Salvo was arranging the time that the marriage ceremony was to take place, the Marquis, his father, became almost frantic, at the lengthened absence of his son. The Marchioness, also, was under the greatest fear and apprehension lest the abode of Amanda should be discovered. Her temper had been much irritated by her son's conduct to the Confessor; and she was one day contemplating his behaviour, when a courier arrived from the Abbess of Santa Floriano, to inform her of the flight of Amanda with Di Salvo. She

raved like a maniac, and paced to and fro in the greatest consternation. When her feelings were a little calmed, she went to the Marquis to inform him of their elopement.

He was greatly agitated at the information; but as she had deceived him with regard to her not having any knowledge of Amanda, he made but little reply to her anger on the occasion.

She then left him, and immediately dispatched a messenger for the father Raldino, to consult with him in her chapel, what steps were best to be taken.

He did not arrive until the evening. He, too, had heard of Amanda's escape, and that she was already married to Di Salvo.

The Marchioness's rage knew no bounds.

"Was this your place of safety?" she exclaimed, "that you sent her to?"

It was with the greatest difficulty that the Father could appease her agitation, to hear him. After a long, gloomy pause, Raldino, in a gruff, yet secretly pleased manner, told her, that there was only one way in which she could extricate her house from the disgrace which had unfortunately fallen upon it.

The Marchioness, now a little recovered from her anger, eagerly asked what it was he alluded to, and desired him to speak low.

The Father cautiously replied—

"Amanda is not immortal; and the few years that may be allotted her, deserve to be forfeited. This," and he, "and this alone, will restore the honour of an illustrious house."

He paused, and the Marchioness was silent some moments. At length she broke the silence by observing—

“But the danger attending such an expedient.”

The Monk allowed there was some hazard in the accomplishment of her death, but at the same time observed—

“My zeal for your family is also beyond all calculation.”

He then stated artfully, that there were many ways of effecting the deed without the least fear of detection.

She bid him name them.

He then mentioned the one he thought best. He said there was a lone and secluded dwelling on the beach, in the province of Aquila, inhabited only by one man.

Here he paused, then looking significantly at the Marchioness, he said—

“*I know him.*”

“And would you trust him, father?” said she.

“Aye, lady, with the life of this girl. Daughter, I have reason to know him.

“Name your reasons, father,” said she, rather impatiently.

“No matter,” said Raldino, in a stifled voice. “She dies!”

“By *his* hands?” asked the Marchioness, with strong emotion, “think once more, father.”

After a moment's pause, during which, it would be difficult to describe the agitated feelings and distorted

countenance of the artful Monk, as he added with displeasure—

“Can you suppose that I, myself?”

“Well,” said the Marchioness, hastily, avoid violence if possible, but let her die quickly.”

As she said this, a low whispering sound made her look up, and she chanced to cast her eyes on an inscription over the confessional, and there appeared in red letters these awful words, *‘God both sees and hears thee!’*

Her countenance immediately underwent a death-like change, and it was with the greatest difficulty she could sustain her tottering limbs. She was silent. But Ral-dino did not observe her emotion, being too much engaged with his own thoughts. At last, addressing the Marchioness, who was somewhat recovered, he said—

“In the dwelling I alluded to, there is a secret door leading to the sea-side, through which her body shall be conveyed to the shore, when darkness covers it; and when it is plunged amidst the waves—”

Here the Marchioness became so violently agitated, that she could hear no more, but in a confused, disordered, and hasty manner, bid him good night, saying—

“We will converse more confidently on this subject at a future period.”

They then parted. She quitted the chapel at one private door, and the Monk at another.

While the Marchioness and the Confessor were meditating conspiracies against the life of Amanda, she was still in the convent on the lake of Celano. Di Salvo

had engaged an aged Friar to solemnize the nuptials, and the first hour after sunset was appointed for the ceremony to take place. The Lady Abbess had also consented that one of the Novices should accompany her to the altar. Every preparation, and requisite arrangement was made on the occasion; and when the ceremony was concluded, the fugitives were to embark in a vessel prepared for them; and crossing the lake, proceed to Naples, where Amanda, for a short time, intended to take up her abode, at the convent della Martino.

At the appointed hour Di Salvo led the agitated maid to the chapel, on the margin of the lake adjoining the convent. On entering which, as her eyes glanced round the place, and rested on one of the casements, she plainly distinguished a face laid close to the glass, seemingly observing what was passing; she named it to Di Salvo, and her fears that it was an enemy at hand. He gently endeavoured to calm her fears; bid her banish all such thoughts, and fear nothing. He then hurried her on to the altar, where they were then met by the priest, who soon after took his station, and opened his book.

He had already begun the ceremony, when a noise from without, so alarmed Amanda, that turning to look from whence the sounds proceeded, she distinctly perceived a man of gigantic stature, accompanied by several other persons, enter the chapel, by a door at a remote corner of the building. The priest observing them also, as they walked quickly up the aisle, enquired, what sacrilegious foot-steps thus rudely dared



to violate that sacred place, and interrupt the solemn ceremony?

The tall figure who preceded the rest, said, in a loud voice—

“You, Rosano di Salvo, of Naples; and you Amanda Insinette, of Villa Altiero, we summons you to surrender, in the name of the most *Holy Inquisition!* At the same time he presented a black scroll to the priest—

“There,” said he, “read, and be satisfied!”

The priest took the paper, and read: and on examination, announced it to be a true instrument of arrestation from the *Holy Office*. The priest shook his head, and lifted his hands and eyes to heaven, exclaimed—

“Unhappy young man, it is too true: you are summoned by that awful power to answer for your crime.”

Di Salvo had been palsied for a few moments by the awful declaration, but recovering himself, he eagerly demanded, what crime he was accused of?

“I did not think you had been thus hardened in guilt,” replied the priest.

“Falshood!” retorted Di Salvo, “I most solemnly deny having committed any crime.”

“Forbear! forbear!” said the friar, seizing his arm, “beware of the punishment you incur from resistance, together with the partner of your guilt, who now lies unconscious at your feet!”

Di Salvo’s feelings, rage, and indignation were now completely stopped.

As Amanda retreated, the sight of her anguish drew him almost to distraction. He had drawn his

sword with the intent to defend her to the last drop of blood; when the priest exclaimed,

“Rash young man! desist. Does not the very veil she wears betray your guilt?”

“You have stolen a nun from her convent,” said the chief officer, “and must answer for your crime.”

Di Salvo, casting his straining eyes on his lovely Amanda, observed for the first time, that she was still shrouded in Heloisa’s veil; which in the hurry of parting, she had forgotten to leave with the recluse. He now saw the wide circumference of the snare that was spread around him. He fancied too, that he perceived the hand of Raldino employed in it; with this conviction he stood aghast, and gazed in silent anguish on Amanda, who now perceived his disordered manner, stretched forth her helpless hands, supplicating him to save her. At the sound of her voice he bid the ruffians depart, or prepare for his fury.

In an instant they all drew their swords, a fierce combat ensued, and Di Salvo, with his servant, Barde, who had followed him to the chapel, were wounded, and at length disarmed.

Amanda, who had been withheld from throwing herself between the combatants, now observing the blood streaming from his wounds, renewed her efforts for liberty, but they proved ineffectual.

In parting accents, Di Salvo called upon the old priest to save and protect her.

“I dare not oppose the orders of the holy Inquisition,” replied the Benedictine. “It is death to resist them”

“Death!” exclaimed Amanda, “death!”

"Aye, lady, too surely it is death!"

"Oh, Amanda," cried Di Salvo, frantic with grief, "must we then part for ever?"

The thought reanimated him with momentary strength; he then burst from the grasp of the ruffians who held him, and once more clasped her to his agonized breast. Amanda, unable to speak, wept with the anguish of a breaking heart, as her head sunk on his shoulder.

Two of the officers then seized Amanda, and bore her away senseless from the chapel, while the rest bound the bleeding, exhausted, Di Salvo, and conveyed him to the Benedictine convent, together with the wounded Bardo.



## CHAPTER XIII.

*This quivering heart that cannot die,  
This burning brow and 'wildered brain,  
Give proof of more than penal pain.*

The state of Di Salvo's mind and body brought on a delirium and fever, which for a length of time baffled all the best medical skill. His wounds—and the wounds of his servant, were pronounced by the Friar who examined them, not to be dangerous: but those of the ruffians

who fought with them, was declared doubtful. The faithful Bardo was permitted to watch by his master's side day and night, till he began slowly to recover, and then they were told to prepare to leave the convent.

On being pronounced by the medical attendant, to be enabled to travel by slow and easy journeys, Di Salvo was now compelled to begin the journey. Bardo was placed with him in the same carriage, and they were accompanied by two officers, who prevented all intercourse or conjecture, as to the immediate occasion of their misfortune. Bardo, indeed, now and then hazarded a surmise, and did not scruple to say and indeed affirm, that the Abbess of Santa Floriano was their chief enemy in the affair. He even ventured to say that he felt confident he had seen the monk, Carlo, lurking about the Ursuline convent, on the lake of Celano, the night before the unfortunate affray had happened. "Those there abbesses," continued Bardo, "are as sly and cunning as those inquisitors, and would rather send a man to the devil at once, than send him *nowhere*."

Di Salvo, now alarmed for the consequences which honest Bardo might be drawing upon himself, insisted on his silence, and was obeyed; although, he said, he saw no harm in telling them a bit of his mind.

The officers meanwhile, never spake, but were observant, and seemed to note down everything that Bardo had said.

They travelled all night, though very slow, stopping only to change horses. At every post house Di Salvo looked out for a carriage that might probably contain his Amanda, but none nor any sound of which, told him

that she followed.

At the dawn of morning, they came in sight of the dome of St. Peter's, that appeared faintly over the plains which surrounded the city of Rome.

Di Salvo now enquired where they were taking him to, and was informed that he was going to the prison of the inquisition in that city.

They now stopped at an inn to change horses for the last time; and when they set forward again, he perceived that the guard was changed; and likewise took notice that their conduct was more temperate; but their countenance expressed a darker cruelty, mingled with a sedate sly demureness, and a solemn self-importance that announced them at once belonging to the inquisition. He was now induced to believe that some stratagem had enthralled him, and that for the first time he was now in the custody of the holy office.

The carriage having reached the walls of the prison, they followed its windings to a great and considerable extent. Having arrived at that part which seemed to be the principal entrance, from the grandeur of its portal, and the gigantic loftiness of the towers that rose over it; and soon after the vehicle stopped at an archway in the walls, strongly barricadoed. One of the escort alighted, and after having struck upon the bars, a folding door within, was opened, and a man, bearing a torch, appeared behind a barricadoe, who immediately unlocked the iron gate. The prisoners were then desired to quit the coach, and were conducted by the two officers into a square room beneath the arch-way.

As they entered one of the passages, Di Salvo perceived a tall gigantic figure, clothed in robes of black, who bore a lighted taper: he was crossing silently, and apparently in deep thought, into the remote perspective; and he understood but too well, from his dress and manners, that he was a member of this dreadful tribunal. The Stranger suddenly paused, then looking at them, and pointing with his finger along another passage, he passed on. Di Salvo followed him with his eyes, until a door at the extremity of the avenue opened, and he saw the Inquisitor enter a room from whence a great light proceeded, and where several other figures, habited like himself, appeared waiting to receive him. The prisoners had rested in the room, by the side of the archway a considerable time, when a dark, ill-looking person entered, who appeared from his words and manner to be the jailor, and into whose hands Di Salvo and Bardo were delivered. One of the officers then left the room, and crossing the entrance hall, ascended a wide stair-case, while the other, with the jailor and the guard, remained below, as if awaiting his return.

Another long interval elapsed, during which, several of the inquisitors, in their long black robes, issued from time to time from the different passages, and appeared to be congregating in one large room, by the side of the grand stair-case.

As they passed to and fro, they eyed the prisoners with curiosity, but without the least pity; and their dark visages seemed stamped with the character of demons.

At length the chief officer descended the stair-case,

and entering the room, said a few words to the other party, but so low as not to be understood. He then turned to Di Salvo, and ordered him to follow him immediately.

Bardo was proceeding with his master, but was kept back by the guard, and told he was to be disposed of in a different way. Di Salvo gave him a parting look, and then followed the officer up the stair-case, and having passed through a long gallery into an anti-chamber, was delivered into the custody of some of the persons in waiting to receive him. His conductor then disappeared through a folding door beyond, that led into an inner apartment.

Over this door was an inscription in Hebrew characters, traced in blood-coloured letters. Dante's inscription on the entrance to the infernal regions, was most suitable to the place where every circumstance and feature seemed to say, *'hope that comes to all, comes not here!'*

The officer soon after appeared again, and having beckoned Di Salvo to follow him, he advanced, his head was uncovered, and his arms bared. The officer then led him forward through the folding doors, into a spacious and lofty apartment, where only two persons were visible, both habited in long black robes. The one, by his piercing eyes and extraordinary physiognomy, seemed to be an inquisitor of the first order. He wore on his head a kind of black turban, which only increased the awful ferocity of countenance. The other person was uncovered and his arms bared to the elbow.

At the lower end of the room, suspended from the



roof of an arch in the wall, was a dark curtain; but whether it veiled a window, or shrouded some object, or person necessary to the designs of the said Inquisitors, there was little means of judging.

The first Inquisitor now called on Di Salvo to advance, and when he had reached the table, he put a black book into his hands, and bade him swear to reveal the truth, and to keep secret for ever whatever he might see or hear in that apartment.

Di Salvo hesitated to obey, till a second command in a stern and awful voice from the Inquisitor, obliged him to put the book to his lips. As he laid it down again, he accidentally threw his eyes upon the curtain, he thought it moved, and started in expectation of seeing an accuser, as malicious and vindictive as the monk, Raldino, steal from behind its folds.

The oath was then administered, and the Inquisitor asked Di Salvo whether he understood the nature of the accusation on which he had been arrested?

"The order of my arrestation, informed me," replied Di Salvo, assuming the courage his languid frame would allow him on the occasion, "that I had stolen a nun from her sanctuary.

"You then confess having done so," said the Inquisitor, after a moment's pause, and making a sign to the secretary, who immediately noted down Di Salvo's words.

"I most solemnly deny it," replied Di Salvo with great vehemence; the accusation is false and malicious."

“Recollect yourself,” said the inquisitor sternly, “and confess the truth.”

“Where were you arrested,” was the next question put to him.

“At the chapel of Sant Sebastino, on the lake Celano.”

“You are sure it was not at the village of Legano, on the high road between Celano and Rome.”

Di Salvo then recollected the place where the guard was changed, and he mentioned the circumstance. The secretary was then ordered to note down these circumstantial occurrences, as well as the names of Amanda and Bardo, who were arrested with him in the same place and at the same time and place. The Inquisitor after another long pause, added,

“Were you ever in the church of the San Spirito, at Naples?”

Di Salvo requested to know the name of his accuser before he answered the question; but he was instantly answered that he had no right to demand any thing in that place: that the name of the accuser or informer was always kept secret from the knowledge of the accused person.

“I now perceive,” said Di Salvo, “that it will avail me nothing to be guiltless; a single enemy is sufficient to accomplish my destruction.”

“You have an enemy then?” observed the Inquisitor.

Di Salvo was but too well convinced that he had an enemy, but there was not sufficient proof as to his person, to justify him in asserting that it was the monk, Raddino.

The Inquisitor then bade him to consider of the admonition he had received, and prepare to confess on the morrow, or to undergo the questions; an answer to which would be then expected, nay even enforced from him.

He then ordered the officer to receive his prisoner, and to see that his orders were strictly obeyed.

Di Salvo was conducted back by the officer from this awful apartment, and he and his servant, Bardo, were confined and strictly guarded in different rooms of the inquisition, there to await the farther pleasure of the grand and most holy inquisitors, as they are called.

The two ruffians who bore Amanda away from the chapel of Santa Sebastiano, conveyed their helpless prize to a carriage they had in waiting; in which she was placed, and each taking a seat beside her, the coachman was ordered to drive off with the utmost expedition. Their journeys continued two nights and two days.

On Amanda's recovering from the fit into which she had fallen, she gazed wildly at her guards, and demanded whither they were conveying her to.

One of the men told her no questions would be answered, therefore she had better compose herself and be quiet.

She entreated to know if she was going back to the convent of Santa Floriano.

The other ruffian answered, no.

Amanda's heart beat lighter at this abrupt reply, and she endeavoured to calm her agitated feelings, and await patiently the end of her journey.

Towards noon of the second day they approached a

forest, spreading over the many rising steep of Garganus. They had travelled a many miles through the forest, some parts of which Amanda could not help admiring the grandeur of. When at last, she perceived their near approach to the sea.

Her guards, who had seldom spoken during the journey, except when they stopped to change horses, now uttered to each other some incoherent questions and answers.

She now ventured to ask how much farther they had to travel.

"You will soon be at the end of your journey, *and at rest!*" replied the other.

"At the end of my journey and at rest?" ejaculated Amanda.

She turned to look at the ruffian who last spoke. As her eyes rested on his savage countenance, she felt her heart die within her.

"You need not look at me," said the villain, "I am not to have the care of you. Your frightened looks seem to say you would not like such a keeper; aye?"

"It was your words and not you that alarmed me," replied Amanda, timidly.

"One would not suppose that it could alarm you, to tell you that you would soon be at the end of this tiresome journey, and that you would then have rest."

Amanda was silent, she dared not hazard another reply.

They had now descended very near to the shore, when the carriage stopt. They requested her to alight; when after saying a few words to the coachman, he

drove back again, leaving one of the horses, upon which they placed Amanda, and guarded her, one on each side.

They now descended carefully the rugged steep, and in half an hour came to the sea-shore, along which they travelled three or four miles; when they came in sight of a dwelling which stood near the margin of the sea.

The guards stopped the horse, and shouted with all their might. No answer was returned.

"We had better go nearer on the other side the path," said one.

They did so, and shouted again, when they were answered by a rough voice from within, and presently the door of the porch was unfastened and opened by a man, whose ferocious and gloomy countenance, wild and hurried look, occasioned Amanda to conjecture that she was brought there to be assassinated. Horror at the supposition chilled all her frame; and when the guard seized her to alight from the horse, which he did rather roughly, her senses forsook her.

On recovering, she found herself in a dark looking room, surrounded by the guards and a stranger, who looked upon each other, hesitated, and then asked her to partake of some refreshment; but Amanda having declined the invitation with as good a grace as she could assume from her fear, begged permission to retire, and obtained leave to withdraw to another apartment.

The Master of the dwelling, whom the guard called Thomo, taking the lamp, conducted her to an inner chamber, where pointing to a miserable mattress on the floor, he told her it was there she was to repose that

night. He then left her, but returned again in a few minutes with a cup of sour wine, and a slice of dark bread ; and being somewhat soothed by even this rough attention, she did not think proper to refuse it. Thomo then left the room and she heard the door barred.

Thus left once more alone, she tried to overcome the dreadful terror that had taken possession of her, by prayer. When after having offered up her vespers with a fervent heart, she felt more calm and resigned, more confiding and composed.

The people below sat till a late hour, talking and drinking: at last their noise ceased, and she imagined they had either left the apartment, or had fallen asleep there. Doubt did not long deceive her; for while she yet listened, she heard footsteps approach her door, and low whisperings of their voices.

Not a word, however, distinctly reached her ear, till, as one of them was departing, another called out, in a half whisper—

“It is below, on the table, in my girdle; make haste.”

The man came back, and said something in a lower voice, to which the other replied—

“She sleeps.”

Or Amanda was deceived by the hissing consonants of some other words.

She then paced her room to and fro as well as her trembling limbs would allow her. She paused at the door, and heard one of them say—

“I think I hear her.”

They then descended the steps, and the roaring of the sea was alone heard in their stead. Happily for Amanda’s

peace, she knew not that her chamber had a secret door, so contrived as to open without making any sound, and by which assassins might enter at any hour of the night without disturbing her. Fright prevented her from thinking of sleep; she therefore determined to keep watch during the night. Alternately did she pace her room, listening, yet dreading to hear the approaching footsteps of Thomo; and it was not until the morning dawned, that she felt courage and composure of mind sufficient to retire to take a little rest.

Anxiety at length yielded to the weariness which oppressed and overpowered her; then laying down on her lowly mattress, she fell into a deep and delightfully calm repose.



## CHAPTER XIV.

What is that soft, that languid smile,  
That mingles with a tender sigh;  
Light spreads the timid blush the while,  
And sweetly sinks the melting eye?  
'Tis the bright sun of April's morn,  
That rises with unsullied ray;  
Nor marks the clouds that swift are borne  
To wrap in shades the future day.

When Lorio Durazzo left his friend Di Salvo to travel for a short period, he took his journey to Italy, the place



where he had passed many of his boyish days, and had completed his education. It was here that he had seen and admired the lady, Celestina Montaldo, and many hours of love and happiness had he passed in her society. But on his return home, after the completion of his studies, he had never visited that country since, and had given up all idea of ever possessing the lady Celestina. Now that he had been disappointed in his amour with the lady Rosalba Di Scangaro, and was obliged to leave home to amuse and divert his mind, he took his way to Italy, and wandered back to the scenes of his earlier days, and sought the object of his first love.

The lady Celestina Montaldo was now arrived at that age when female beauty and loveliness shine forth most conspicuous and engaging. He again saw and had many opportunities of conversing with, and enjoying her society. The youthful flame with which she first inspired him, returned with full force and ardour, now that he felt and knew she lived but to love him.

Ludovico Montaldo, was an aspiring Italian, who aimed at aggrandizing his house by the alliance of his daughters, whose attractions far exceeded those of any around them. The beauty of Victoriano and Celestina was the theme of every youth; but though the charms of each claimed admiration, the diversity of their dispositions would strike the eye of the most superficial observer. Victoriano, to sprightly wit, added a capricious and perverse temper. While Celestina, to the natural softness of her sex, added an engaging amiability and undesigning sweetness of manner, that formed a perfect contrast to the hauteur of her sister.

In their earliest years an uncle dying, had bequeathed his fortune between them, but on condition, that if either of them entered a religious house, or died before attaining the age of twenty-one, or before marriage, the whole accumulating mass should vest in the other.

Ferdinando, duke of Milan, had long contemplated with a sordid eye, the splendid fortunes of the ambitious Montaldo's daughter, and resolved, if both portions could be centered in of them, he would offer her the ducal coronet. He perceived the insatiable avarice of Montalda, and held out the lure, which was eagerly caught at by the cold-hearted father; who hoping to place the glittering bauble on Victoriano's forehead, determined to immure the tender Celestina in the gloomy recesses of the Abbey of Santa della Catarina. Even Victoriana, his ever favoured child, was unacquainted with his designs; but busy rumour at length whispered to her the tale.

She was dazzled for a moment with the empty splendour of title and dignity; yet she could not be blind to the Duke's motives for soliciting the hand of one he had never seen; neither could she be blind to the character of avarice, which, from her earliest years, she remembered that every tongue had coupled with his name. Her father's concealing from her a scheme so important to her interest, wounded her to the quick; but he now stooped to tell her that the hour was speedily approaching that would introduce her to her intended lord: and the hope of being hailed throughout Italy as lady-duchess, aided by her father's arguments, quickly overpowered all other considerations.

The tender passions had but little rest in the heart of Montaldo. His anxieties, however, were all alive, not to the interests of his offspring, but to the elevation of his house; and great were his fears lest Celestina should vehemently protest against taking the vows.

The communication of his schemes he determined should devolve upon the Prioress of Santa della Caratina; whose despotic sternness, he rightly conjectured, would compel prompt obedience to dictates which were so strongly connected with the interests of the abbey.

Celestina, being three years younger than her sister, had scarce seen her eighteenth year, and had from her childhood been an almost constant inmate of the convent, although privileged to go abroad at different periods, and occasionally to visit her friends and the neighbouring gentry around. Her education was now completed, and she had begun to anticipate her emancipation from a confinement, which, to a young and ardent imagination was rigid and galling, when she was thunderstruck by the Abbess's intimation, that the hallowed walls of San Caterina were to protect her for ever! Hoping to add to the riches of her house, the Prioress, while she communicated this unwelcome news, spared no argument which she thought might induce Celestina to bow to her father's wishes.

The Abbess left her lost in dismay and labouring under ill concealed agony. Her thoughts had never for a moment dwelt upon the prospect that was now displayed to her, like the dreary expanse of a horrid waste. The abrupt communication of her father's mandate, wrung her heart with a thousand pangs. Knowing his violent

temper, and that she could scarcely hope for any hand to rescue her from such a fate, she sank down under the anticipation of revolving years of living death; and which would end only in the thick darkness of the tomb. Her mind, nursed in monkish superstition had been taught to look for consolation only in the capricious dispensation of a confessor; a disclosure to whom of her real feelings, would blast that bitter remnant of life which yet remained; for though thus dragged from every joy at so early an age, she had poignant feelings to combat with. She had never known the fond affection of maternal care, his mother having been snatched from life, leaving her younger daughter in a cold world, like a budding snow-drop exposed to the nipping frosts. Her stern father had even treated her with parental authority, though apparently with little parental affection. Victoriana was her favourite child; and her bold appearance and quick retort could parry a rebuke that would have sunk the milder spirit of the timid Celestina. She felt to its full extent the duty she owed to her father; but she felt what she scarcely dared acknowledge, that she fostered in her bosom the warmest affection for another, whose form in ideal vision, became the imaginary companion of her solitary moments. Now that he was returned to her arrived at the years of manhood; she had associated with him every joy with which her fancy had spangled the future path of life; had dissipated approaching sorrows, by the impression that he would support her through them; and by sharing her cares, render her burthen light. So often she dwelt with fond delight on the hour which fond remembrance would

paint to her, when his eyes in stolen glances first told her the emotions of his bosom; when chance gave him the only opportunity of clasping her hand. The feverish ardour of his pressure was still left, but must she bid her adieu to these thoughts for ever! must she now be torn from every joy! must she never again think of Lorio Durazzo? Perish the horrid thought; it was worse than death; it racked her whole frame; it was past endurance. Yet she knew that every preparation was making for her speedily taking that veil, which once assumed, would for ever separate her from the object of her dearest hopes.

We have already informed the reader that Lorio Durazzo was the descendant and heir of a noble family, and he united with a graceful person every disposition that could endear him to a tender heart. He had admired Celestina, he now ardently loved and aspired to obtaining her hand.

When Victoriana attained the age of twenty-one, Montaldo threw open his halls, and assembled all the youth and nobility of the city to a sumptuous entertainment in celebration of the event. Celestina was permitted to join the festive scene. It was then that fortune in a momentary interchange of glances, blest Lorio with the assurance that Celestina was not indifferent to his passion.

From this instant, he gave reins to his every hope, and allowed his ardent imagination to paint the varied scenes of future bliss. With eager attention he watched Montaldo's movements; he greedily listened to every rumour, nor was it long ere he heard that the duke of

Milan was to be united to Victoriana; and that Celestina was doomed to cloistered seclusion, a fate which he resolved to frustrate, or die in the attempt.

The emergency of his situation compelled him to subdue his conflicting feelings; and penning a few hasty lines, he flew to deposit them in an obscure niche near the chapel of the convent.

It was evening; the setting sun had gilded with his retiring rays the topmost spires of the city; the bustle of life had given way to softened quiet, when the perturbed footsteps of Lorio echoed through the vaulted cloisters of Santa della Catarina. The swelling organ, accompanied by the thrilling voices of the sister-hood, and deeper tones of the monks, now rose in solemn cadence, and floated through the noiseless aisles. Lorio paused—he listened for a moment, vainly imagining that he might perchance distinguish the silvery notes of his Celestina; but no! the hymn, wafted heavenward, died on his ear, and the concluding vespers roused him from his momentary reverie.

Scarcely had he retired, ere the stately Abbess, followed by her daughters, passed from the chapel. All had now entered the convent, save one; it was Celestina. She lingered, hoping unobserved to snatch from its marble tomb, her expected prize. In the well-known crevice was Lorio's letter, now doubly welcome when there scarce appeared ought else in the world to cheer her. She burst it open, and eagerly ran over its contents, which yielded her at once joy and dismay. Lorio loved her, ardently loved her; would brave any danger to render her happy; but how did her mind magnify the peril

that would attend any plan devised for her rescue. Dangers arose on every side, in every shape; surrounded by misfortune, she felt she lived but to despair.

A footstep now sounded near; it was the abbot, Augustine. His approach redoubled her agitation. In her emotion she dropped Lorio's letter, which Augustine picking up, was on the point of restoring to her, when the eager anxiety of her effort to regain it, awoke his suspicions. Thrusting her from him, he quickly perused it, and then vehemently called for the lady Abbess, with a voice that rung around the desolate and secluded cloisters.

In the intervals of his fury, the plaintive voice of Celestina was heard, beseeching his pity and silence. Her supplications were vain; he heeded not, but reiterated his calls on the lady Abbess.

The lights now flickered over the murky wails; the Abbess with her train of sisterhood pressing forward were stopped by surprise. Whence was this intrusion—How! Father Augustine, with the Novice prostrate at his feet.

Had it been any other than Augustine, what would have been her suspicions. He was the church's idol and the people's pride. Twice twenty thousand tongues proclaimed his spotless purity.

But the youth, the beauty of Celestina. He left her, however, brief time for supposition. Unfolding the sad tale, and presenting Lorio's letter, he soon roused the Prioress to all the fury of her stern nature.

Celestina bade adieu to every hope; already fearful visions were before her eyes, portentous of her horrid



doom. She sunk under the thought, and the sisterhood supporting her lifeless from the spot, left the unfeeling Abbot to meditate on his cruelty.

Had but one ray of pity touched his cruel soul, he might have led a weary wanderer back amidst the still waters and the pastures green, to bless his aid and humbly walk with God.

But Augustine, what said thy conscience?

He asked it not; but flying from its dictates, he plunged into deeper scenes of blood.

Hate, rooted hate to Celestina's house, had deafened him to her heart smiting entreaties, when her anguish would have softened the most obdurate. But in Celestina's misery he saw only the first step to that revenge on Montalda which he had so long cherished with ardent desire.

In early life, Count Lermain had loved with the tenderest passion one who warmly returned his attachment, nor did there appear any obstacle to his union with all he desired, when on the eve of his nuptials, he found himself plunged in sudden ruin. Heated with wine, urged onward by a frantic appetite of gain, he staked his fortune to a fellow noble—he cast the die and all was lost.

His treacherous rival, with specious offers of relief, persuaded him to take on bond a thousand ducats, and seek another clime, leaving his patrimony to liquidate his debts. But scarce had he reached a foreign shore, ere payment of the bond was demanded, and he, a friendless, unknown bankrupt, hurried to a distant prison.

Meanwhile rumour spread a report of his being mur-

dered, and that his mangled carcase had been east into the deep; a tale which gained credit from his mysterious disappearance. His plighted bride, distracted, unconscious what she did, was by a sordid parent, wrought upon, ere one short year had elapsed, with faltering lips to confirm the vows that bound her to another for ever. Years rolled over Lermain's head, unmarked to him by the light of day, when a public festival gave freedom to his emaciated form. He hastened to Chivazzo; there he heard the almost forgotten tale of his death; and unrecognized in his altered person, beheld his rival possessing all that he had once longed for. It was too much. The bright orb of day beamed on him free indeed; but ruined both in mind and circumstances, by a dreadful oath, he bound himself to be avenged; then sought Santa della Catarina's gloomy walls; and there by bitter penance and austere guise, deemed little less than saint, he rose to the highest offices. His fame was not confined to the precincts of his convent nor the boundaries of the city: the piety of father Augustine was a theme of far more universal admiration. Long had the saintly hypocrite beheld with savage joy, the ambition of Montaldo, and anticipated all the delights of revenge in blighting his hopes. Now he perceived the time fast approaching, when he should hurl his unsuspecting oppressor headlong from the summit of his wishes, and involve him in the blackest despair. The emissaries of the abbot Augustine, on the duke of Milan's arrival, conveyed to him assurances of Celestina's firm determination to resist taking the veil, and the information, also, that she was passionately attached to a nobleman,

who would doubtless use every endeavour to prevent her impending doom; thus awakening the Duke's mind to the precarious chance of his obtaining this half of the golden dower, while on the other hand he learned that Victoriana secretly countenanced the buzzing flatteries of a cowardly fop, who had not a ducat to call his own. To accept her hand with only half the fortune, would not answer his greedy views; but she was too rich a prize to lose, and he resolved to urge Montaldo to consummate the vows of both his daughters in one evening; hoping that the same hour which witnessed the forlorn Celestina torn from the world, would behold Victoriana plunging into its vortex, and would place within his grasp all her wealth.

But Victoriana treated him with a disdainful coldness, and ironical contempt, which, though it might occasionally cause him a momentary smart, he did not regret, hoping to reserve it as a plausible excuse for declining her hand, should more weighty reasons eventually decide his doing so.

Night hushed all in sleep, but Augustine slept not; he pillowed himself on the near approach of his revenge, and the dawn of day shewed his victims deeply entangled in the net he had spread for them.

The Abbess determining to visit Celestina's fault with the heaviest punishment her despotic spirit could devise, had condemned her to a dungeon's dreary gloom, thus cutting her off from the smallest comfort, hoping that the misery of her fate would induce her, more willingly, to listen to the proposals from her taking the veil. Dreading to lose so rich a prize from her house,

she was anxious to see her speedily within the pale of the church, and her wishes were gratified by the arrival of a messenger from Montaldo, announcing his wish that the ensuing evening might be the period that should fix his daughter's fate. The Abbess readily gave directions to hurry onward every preparation for the event, and then hastened to visit Celestina, to endeavour by her artifices and persuasions, to accept the veil without any further oppositions to the wishes, and determination of her father.



## CHAPTER XV.

But o'er the bright prospect Care's clouds closed around,  
And veiled all my hopes in a darkness profound ;  
Joy yielded to anguish, and gloomy despair,  
Assail'd my sad bosom and fix'd itself there.

Amanda had slept profoundly for four hours, when she was awakened by a loud knocking at her chamber door, and the undrawing of the iron bolts, convinced her of the approach of Thomo, who had brought her some breakfast, which consisted of an oaten cake, and a basin of milk. He set it down and instantly withdrew. She looked at him as he hastily retired, and

her horrid ferocious features made her shudder ; and some time had elapsed, with thinking of Thomo, before she remembered that he had brought the refreshment she so much required. She now approached the food with the intention of partaking some of it, when as she lifted it to her lips, a horrible suspicion rushed into her mind, and arrested her hand ; it was not however before she had swallowed a small quantity of the milk. The look which her keeper had given her on his leaving the room, had made her suspect that poison had been infused in the liquid, and she feared even to taste the cake, since Thomo had offered it. The words of one of the guards who brought her there, often rushed into her mind :—" That she would soon be at her journey's end, and would be at rest !" and again, " that he was not to be her keeper." But for what other purpose could they have brought her to such a lonely place, except to have an opportunity of taking away her life, without the fear of interruption or detection ? In this agonizing and terrified state of mind she passed the greater part of the day, and in listening for approaching footsteps against the bars of the windows. Lost in one of her reveries, and looking through one of the casements she heard voices, and soon saw two men enter at one side of the house. She then went to the door and listened for some sounds from within the house, that might assist her in her conjectures as to the number of persons there were below, or what might be passing there.

She now cast her eyes on the basin with the milk, and recollecting she had left the greatest part of it, she

took it up, and going to the window, poured it through the bars. Again she listened, and wondered she had not heard a female voice ; but as all seemed quiet, she ventured to take a slight repose on her mattress, intending to watch during the night. She had not dozed long when she was disturbed by a noise at her door, and she distinctly heard first one bar gently undrawn, and then another ; and presently the face of Thomo presented itself half way through the open door way. Without immediately entering, he threw a fearful glance round the chamber, when perceiving Amanda lying on the mattress, he ventured towards it with quick and unequal steps ; his horrid countenance expressing the consciousness of guilt. When he was within a few paces, Amanda gently raised herself up. He started back as if a spectre had suddenly crossed him ; but quickly recovering himself, he said--

“ You have had no dinner, I forgot to bring you any, not being in the habit of having anyone to wait upon. But supper will soon be ready, and you may walk upon the beach till then, if you will.”

“ Thank you,” said Amanda ; and she most willingly accepted his offer.

They now descended to the lower room of the house, no person appearing but her conductor. Thomo then pointed towards the west, and said she might walk a little that way. Amanda therefore bent her course towards the many sounding waves, followed at a short distance by Thomo.

It was a dusky lowering evening, and the sea was dark and swelling ; and as she moved farther on, looking

at the awful grandeur of the scene, she perceived a monk walking silently beneath the dark rocks that overbrowed the beach. As he drew near he viewed her askance, without lifting his head and passed by.

Amanda paused and watched him as far as the darkened atmosphere would allow her, and determined when he should be at a little farther distance, to endeavour to make her way to a neighbouring hamlet she had discovered before her when she first set out. But on turning back to see if Thomo observed her, he was not within sight; she therefore hastened forward, though fearful of being pursued. Again she looked back, and both the Monk and Thomo were coming after her, engaged in deep conversation. They soon noticed her rapid progress, and called loudly on her to stop; their voices echoed awfully among the rocks. She looked hopelessly at the distant cottages, and reluctantly slackened her pace.

The Monk now came up with her, and in a voice stifled by emotion, said—

“Whither go you, and who are you?”

Hope, the anchor of the soul, whispering to her that perhaps he would compassionate her distressing situation, she replied, sighing deeply—

“I am an unhappy orphan. If you have the least compassion, pity my distress.”

“Who and what is it you fear?” said the Monk, eyeing her.

“I fear even for my life,” replied Amanda, with hesitation.

The frown and scowl with which the Monk now



regarder her, was so terrific that she shrunk tremblingly back, and an apprehension of the immediate and terrible vengeance which such an agent seemed about to accomplish, entirely subdued her senses, and she sank upon the beach.

As Raldino, (for it was indeed him) now gazed upon her helpless faded form, his heart upbraided him, and he seemed sensible to some touch of pity, but recollecting his mission, all sense of compassion was instantly banished from his breast.

“What!” said he, “shall the weakness of a girl subdue the resolution of a man? No. *Now* is the time for vengeance. *Now* is the time to accomplish my threatened purpose!”

He had a dagger concealed beneath his monk’s habit, but he hesitated to use it; the blood which it might spill would be observed in the morning by the peasants of the neighbouring hamlet, and might lead to a discovery. He paused for a few moments from his diabolical purpose.

At length he thought it would be safer, and he considered easier to lay Amanda, senseless as she was, in the waves; their coldness would perhaps recal her to life only at the moment before they would suffocate and put an end to her for ever. He approached with the intention of raising the senseless form, but as he stooped to lift her from the ground, she moved, and his resolution was subdued. He feared she would revive ere he could accomplish the direful deed. He now abruptly left her and retired among the rocks which led to the house.

When Amanda began to recover, she gazed wildly around her, then recollecting her situation, she arose and looked round, but could see no one—the clouds had dispersed and the stars shone brightly. She now renewed all her efforts to sustain herself till she could reach the hamlet; but ere she had proceeded many paces she heard Thomo swiftly approaching. He soon overtook her and led her back to her prison. When she heard the fatal door of that room barred again upon her she sank upon the mattress, and thought she should never again quit the walls of that gloomy mansion with life. She retired to rest, quite overpowered with distress; and after weeping for some time at her unhappy fate, she sank into a sound sleep.

Raldino, on his arrival at the house, immediately dispatched Thomo to bring back Amanda, as soon as he had seen him enter with her, and she was barred close in her chamber, he summoned him, and gave him strict commands not to approach his chamber till he should be told so to do. He then threw himself into a chair, and for a considerable time remained lost in the most gloomy thoughts. At the very instant that his heart reproached him with the crime he had meditated; he regretted also the ambitious views he must relinquish, if he should either commit the fatal deed himself, or have it perpetrated by another: and he regarded himself with some degree of feeling and contempt, for having hitherto hesitated for a moment on the subject. He now resolved that nothing should prevent the deed being accomplished that night, as soon as he thought she was buried in deep sleep. The Count Barretto, for such had for-

merly been the title and dignity of the confessor, was the younger son of an ancient and noble family, who resided in the Duchy of Milan, on such estates of their ancestors as the Italian wars of a former century had left them. The portion which he (Raldino) received at the death of his father, was not large; and his proud, haughty, and overbearing spirit, disdained to acknowledge an inferiority of fortune, to those with whom he considered himself upon an equality in point of rank; he therefore withdrew from the neighbourhood, unwilling to submit his altered circumstances to the observation of any one who had formerly been, even his most intimate acquaintance. No one knew whither, or to what part of the world he had gone, for he left suddenly and mysteriously. Concerning several years of his life, from this period, nothing was generally known; and when he was next discovered, it was at the Spirito Santo Convent, at Naples, in the habit of a monk, and under the assumed name of the Father Raldino. He had been some time confessor to the Marchioness di Salvo, when the conduct of her son awakened his hopes, by shewing him, that he might render himself not only useful, but necessary to her, by his counsils. He soon perceived that her passions were strong, and her judgment weak; and that pride, haughty family pride, was the ruling foible of both herself and the Marquis; and he no sooner found out who it was that her son had fixed his affections upon, than it was represented to her as being an intimacy likely to prove a great stain upon her house. At length he so completely insinuated himself into her confidence, as to obtain a promise, of

an high office of dignity in the church, which she had a sufficient influence to obtain, and the condition was that of preserving the honour of her family ; and which she was most careful to make him understand, could only now be secured by the removing Amanda to some distant place of security, out of Di Salvo's reach, or by her death.

Thomo, as has already been hinted at, was a former confidant of the confessors, who knew but too truly, from experience, that he could be trusted to commit any dark deed ; but he would be well paid for his works of darkness, and cruelty.

After Raldino had left Amanda on the beach, he upbraided himself, that he had not had firmness and promptitude sufficient to accomplish the deed at once, without depending on Thomo, who he suspected did not seem to like the office of being the murderer of Amanda.

However, he immediately made to the house and dispatched him to bring her back, to her chamber ; and when he had seen her safely there, he ordered that he might not be disturbed, until he called him ; he then retired to his room. The night was far advanced when he summoned Thomo to his chamber, to instruct him in his office ; after he had bolted the door carefully, by which the man had entered, he said, in a low voice,—

“It is now late Thomo, go, therefore, to her chamber ; be certain that she sleeps.” “Take this,” he added, “and this,” giving him a dagger and a large black cloak. “You know how you are to use them.”

Thomo hid the poinard in his bosom, and moved with a loitering step towards the door.

"Dispatch!" said the confessor, in a hasty angry tone, "why do you linger?"

"Why as how, I cannot say I much like this business, Signor," said Thomo, surlily; "I know not why I should always do the most, and be paid the least."

"Sordid Villain!" in an outrageous angry tone, exclaimed Raldino, "you are not satisfied then?"

"It is too little," replied Thomo; "besides what harm has she done me?"

"What harm had others done you! you forget that I know you, you forget the past."

"No, Signor; I do not forget the past, nor never shall, while life flows in these fevered veins; the bloody hand is always before me! I even see it now; and often of a night, when the sea roars, and storms shake the house, *they* have come, all gashed as I left them, and stood before my bed! I have got up, and ran out of the room! I have ran to the shore for safety! Down I have sunk on the beach, and it has been morning dawn ere I have recollected what occasioned my being in that place."

"Dastardly! cowardly! sordid villain!" exclaimed Raldino, "give *me* the dagger then."

"Most willingly," said Thomo, resigning the stiletto, and throwing the cloak over his arm: he then left the room.

Raldino, on ascending the steps, was reminded that he had no lamp; he therefore took the one from Thomo, and bolted the door of his apartment, proceeded till he reached Amanda's secret door, which he opened, and on cautiously looking round the room he perceived she was laid on her mattress to rest. On a nearer approach to

the bed, her gentle, calm breathings informed him that she slept. He searched for the dagger, and it was some time before his trembling hand could disengage it from the folds of his garment; but having done so, he prepared to strike the fatal blow. When, drawing aside the lawn from her bosom, he started; some new cause of horror seemed to seize his whole frame. He observed, set in a most brilliant frame, a miniature which had lain beneath the lawn that he withdrew, and the sight of which, struck to his very soul; and forgetting, in his impatience to know the truth, the imprudence of discovering himself at the hour of night, with a dagger, he called out loudly—

“Awake! awake! say what is your name? speak quickly.”

Amanda, roused by his voice, and starting up from her mattress, threw herself at his feet, supplicating for mercy.

“Have pity, holy father,” she exclaimed, clasping her hands in an agony.

“Father!” interrupted Raldino. Then trying to recollect himself, he said, “why are you thus terrified? Tell me instantly whose portrait that is.”

Amanda lifted it up from her aching breast, gazed upon it for a moment, and then pressing it fervently to her lips, she said—

“O God! if thou hadst spared him, I had not known this dreadful hour.”

“Whose likeness is that?” was again asked by the Monk, with great agitation.

“Alas!” said she, mournfully gazing at it, “it was



my father; but alas he is dead, or I should not now want a protector."

"Your father!" replied Raldino, in a hollow voice, "and his name?"

"It is sacred," answered Amanda, "for he was unfortunate; and I have given my word and promise to conceal it."

"On your life I charge you to tell it me."

The fury and agitation of his manner compelled Amanda to reveal the secret.

"His name, then," said she, "was Barretto."

Raldino now groaned in a most terrific manner, and turned away from the surprised and astonished girl; but struggling to calm his feelings a little, he presently returned to her and demanded the place of his residence.

"It was far from hence," she replied.

But he insisted on having an unequivocal answer, and she reluctantly gave one. Raldino, now more strongly and feelingly agitated, said in a faltering voice—

"Unhappy child! behold your more unhappy father!"

"My father!" exclaimed the still more astonished Amanda, still kneeling at his feet, with uplifted hands and eyes, that rested upon him with awe and wonder.

"Why do you reproach me with those looks?" said the conscience-stricken Raldino.

"Reproach you! reproach my father!" repeated Amanda; "*why* should I reproach my father?"

"*Why*!" exclaimed Raldino, starting from the seat upon which he had thrown himself; "O, ye sacred powers."

As he moved, he stumbled over the dagger that had



dropped from his hand on seeing the miniature, and which now lay at his feet; he pushed it aside and leaned against the wall to support his trembling limbs from falling.

Amanda did not fortunately see the dagger. In the first tumult of her thoughts she had not leisure to dwell upon the singularity of Raldino's visiting her at this deep hour of the night; but now recollecting herself, she eagerly enquired of him why he came to her at that time.

"This is past midnight, father," said she, "you may judge, then, how anxious I am to learn what motive led you to my chamber at this lonely hour."

Raldino made her no reply.

"Did you come to warn me of approaching danger?" she continued; "had you discovered the cruel designs of Thomo? or did you—"

Raldino, in a horrid manner, desired her to name the subject no more; and sighing heavily, he turned to a distant part of the room. He had stood for some time, seemingly lost in gloomy thought, and Amanda regarding him with emotions of alternate hope and fear, when at last she ventured cautiously to ask him, how she might venture to believe a circumstance so surprising as that he had revealed; and reminded him that he had not, as yet, disclosed his reason for admitting the belief that she was his daughter. He accordingly mentioned some few circumstances concerning Amanda's family, that at once proved him to be, at least intimately acquainted with it, and which she believed were known only to herself and the Signora Marietta.

Fearing she might still persist in asking questions his agitated feelings at the present would not permit him to answer, he turned to her, and in as calm and composed a manner as he could possibly assume, he desired her to endeavour to compose herself; assuring her she should be removed from that house on the following day, and be restored to her home.

He then bid her good night, abruptly left the room, and retired to his own chamber, not to sleep, but to abandon himself to all the reproaches of an upbraiding conscience, and the agonies of sorrow and remorse.



## CHAPTER XVI.

Then let pale envy with malignant spite,  
And purse-proud ignorance, with paltry guile,—  
Let all the darkest powers of earth unite,  
To bear me down—and I will rise and smile.

For a length of time after Raldino had left her, Amanda sat lost in contemplating the events of the past few hours. She recollected all the many particulars which he had revealed concerning her family; and comparing them with such as she had heard from Signora Marietta, she did not perceive anything that was the least contradic-

tory in the two accounts. But she shuddered, and there was a something most revolting to her timid mind, in reconciling Raldino to be her father in the character he had discovered himself. Her thoughts then glanced back involuntarily to the scene of the preceding evening on the sea shore; and his image appeared in each in the terrible character of an agent of the Marchioness di Salvo. Again, she recollected that the stern ferocity of his manner had quite overpowered his senses; and yet, if he had been employed to commit a deed of darkness and of death, why not have perpetrated the horrid crime then?

While these reflections were passing in her mind in quick succession, her eyes involuntarily wandered round the room; when casting them downwards, they rested on the point of the dagger which Raldino had dropped. The point was just peeping from beneath the curtain. She approached the spot, and picking up the instrument, she gazed upon it aghast and trembling. For a few moments a suspicion of the real motives of Raldino's visit to her chamber, glanced across her mind, but it was only for an instant; she readily believed that Thomo alone had meditated her destruction, and that Raldino, having discovered the ruffian's designs, had rushed into the chamber to save a stranger, and had unconsciously rescued his own daughter, when the portrait of her bosom informed him of the truth.

With a mind still fearful and anxious with regard to the future, Amanda again laid down on her mattress, to endeavour to compose her agitated and languid frame, to support the journey Raldino had promised her she

should commence on the next day. Tired nature soon yields, and she fell into a profound slumber, from which she did not awake till the morning was far spent.

Meanwhile Raldino had passed the time very differently: shut up in his chamber, his feelings were agitated by the most poignant reflections; and he had to acknowledge most painfully, that the crimes he had been guilty of had brought the just punishment with them. The bitter anguish which now rent his very soul almost drove him to commit a deed still more dreadful than those which now distracted him. He discovered too that he had left the fatal dagger in the chamber, and fearing that Amanda might discover it, and suspect his being in her room, was with a design to take away her life, he gave way for a time to all the horrors which surrounded him: he even almost dared to wish the deed had been perpetrated. How was he to meet his own cruelly oppressed, injured child? Again he wished he had not disclosed to her the truth that she was his daughter. Stung to the heart by the very bitterest remorse, he now sat down to endeavour to compose himself, and to think what plan would be best for him to adopt. He now perceived that in pursuing Amanda at the instigation of the Marchioness Di Salvo, he had been most cruelly oppressing and persecuting his own child. Every step that he had taken with a view of gratifying his ambition had proved retrograde; and while he had been wickedly intent on serving the Marchioness and himself by preventing the marriage of Rosano and Amanda, he had been barbarously counteract-

ing his own good fortune, and the future happiness and welfare of his offspring.

He now, therefore, strove to calm his emotions, and determined to adopt quite a different line of conduct, and endeavour to promote by every possible means what he had been striving to prevent, and thus, in some measure atone for his crimes and cruel misconduct.

The first steps, however, necessary to be taken, were those that might release Di Salvo from the power of the Inquisition, the direful and tremendous prison into which the arts and machinations of Raldino had caused him to be thrown. But, there appeared so many almost insurmountable dangers and difficulties in the accomplishment of this undertaking, that he was compelled to relinquish and postpone the attempt for the present.

As the morning began to dawn, the most painful feelings obtruded themselves upon his mind; the idea of meeting his injured and lovely child, struck like a dagger to his heart, and he felt that the sight of his child would be almost more than he could endure. Yet as it must be so, necessity compelled him to exert and fortify himself for the interview; and endeavour by every kindness and attention to her future comfort and happiness, to dispel any bad opinion she might have formed, from his late conduct towards her. As the hour was now arrived, when he ought to begin to think of preparing for their departure, he went to release Thomo from his chamber, where he had locked him in. He now ordered him to go instantly and procure horses from the neighbouring inn, in the hamlet; while he would prepare breakfast. He then repaired to Amanda's apartment,

and requested she would prepare for her departure, informed her that she might descend and take the air for a short time if she felt so disposed. Having no preparation to make, she gladly descended to the open air, to inhale the refreshing sea breezes for a short time. How different were her feelings from the last night! As she approached the spot on the beach on which her father (if such he really was) had so terrified her, she fell on her knees, and offered her "Ave Maria" of thanksgiving for her miraculous escape, as she firmly believed from a cruel and untimely death. She felt no wish to wander far, and therefore turned her steps back again towards the house; when she met Raldino coming out, who informed her that the breakfast was ready. Thomo soon returned with the horses; and after having partaken of a slight repast they prepared to commence their journey. As Raldino had not hinted the slightest word to Thomo, of the discovery he had made of Amanda being his daughter, he started, and was not a little surprised, and apparently pleased at the sight of her at breakfast, when he entered to inform Raldino that the horses were ready. What! he faintly murmured, has your courage failed too?

Raldino now assisted Amanda to mount, and they set forward with Thomo for their guide. Amanda, on finding that he was to be their conductor, began to be greatly alarmed, and could not help expressing her fears on the occasion, but Raldino assured her she had nothing to fear, and entreated her to be composed. As it was night when they brought her to this lonely dwelling, she had not an opportunity of viewing much of the road she



had past, she now felt gratified and pleased with many beautiful scenes and objects they came to. They travelled a considerable distance without exchanging a word, for as Raldino appeared lost in thought, she amused herself with admiring the beauties of the country through which they passed, and felt grateful for the apparent enjoyment of her liberty.

At length they came to an abrupt winding of the road, when Raldino, as if awakened from a deep reverie, rather suddenly mentioned the name of Di Salvo. Amanda's spirits fluttered with alternate hope and fear, and although she felt the greatest impatience to learn his exact situation, she felt timid at making any inquiries respecting it, however convinced she might feel that he could give her the desired intelligence respecting his fate. She was therefore silent, until he again named it, when she ventured to make enquiry, if he knew where he was, and if he were well.

"I am no stranger to your attachment," said Raldino, evading the enquiry she had made, "but I wish to be informed where it was that you and Di Salvo first met."

With some little degree of embarrassment she replied, "that she had first seen Di Salvo, when attending her aunt from the Church of San Lorenzo, at Naples."

Again he became thoughtful for some time, when again interrogating her on the subject, their conversation was suddenly interrupted by Thomo, stopping to inform them that they were approaching the town of Zanti. They very soon after reached it, and Thomo led the way to a cabin, in which the few persons who passed



this road, were usually entertained. They now dismounted, and Raldino ordered refreshment; while they partook of the repast, Thomo was dispatched to examine the post-horses, and to procure a lay-habit for the Confessor. During his absence, Raldino called in the host, and enquired for a guide to conduct them through that part of the forest which remained to be traversed, as he much wished to dismiss Thomo. The repast being ended, they began to wish for Thomo's return; when after waiting nearly an hour, he came back without having succeeded in his commission, as no lay-habit could be procured that would in the least degree suit Raldino.

The landlord, who had instantly left the room in search of a guide, now returned with one in every way competent to conduct them through that dreary part of the forest they had got to traverse. As Amanda cast her eyes on the honest, good looking countenance of the guide, she felt rejoiced at the change, for many times during their journey through the forest, she had felt greatly alarmed, especially if Thomo paused, and waited for them to come up with him.

Thomo now received his dismissal, and never had the ferocity of his looks, or the forbidding roughness of his manners appeared more conspicuous than on this occasion, and he departed with sudden reluctance and evident ill will.]

The horses they were going to have next, had not long arrived off their last journey, therefore it was absolutely necessary they should rest a little longer before they started again; and as Raldino had calculated that they

could easily reach the next town ere the close of the evening, he had no objection to wait the landlord's appointed time ere they proceeded on their way. Amanda, therefore, to amuse herself during their stay, took a slight view of the small town of Zanti. She had walked for about an hour, when on returning to the inn, and the horses being ready, they continued their journey.

It was afternoon when they set forward again, and the same thoughtful silence that existed at the beginning of their journey, was still preserved by Raldino, till they arrived near the town, at which they meant to pass the night; he then made a few remarks to the guide, till they arrived at the inn, when ordering some refreshment, they were glad to rest from the fatigues of the day, and enjoy a cooling repast. Soon after supper they retired to rest, and Raldino, having procured a lay habit, by the morning dawn, they pursued their route, conducted by the same guide. Raldino was more communicative this day than on the preceding one. He pointed out to his daughter every object of particular note, and entered into a long conversation with her, on a design he had formed of placing her in some convent, where she would be comfortable and happy, until the proper period should arrive for him to acknowledge her as his daughter. Amanda immediately mentioned the convent Della Martino, but although he seemed to listen very attentively to her wishes on that head, yet he came to no determination, nor did he give his decided assent to her going there.

They now entered the most dreary and rugged part of the forest they had to pass, but Amanda's thoughts were

too much occupied by her future prospects, to give leisure for present fears, to feel any alarm, or to regard the obscure, dangerous road along which they were travelling.

Towards evening, as the twilight was rapidly approaching, the guide suddenly stopped, to point out to them the grey walks of an elegant, but almost ruined edifice; and which, from the air of desolation it betrayed, seemed to be entirely uninhabited.

Here, Raldino, seeing a person crossing the road to the ruins, determined to ascertain if they could procure any refreshment near at hand, and for this purpose they called to him; but he either did not hear, or would not obey their call, but disappeared among the ruins. The guide leading the way, they now proceeded along a gloomy avenue, till they arrived at the edifice, when lost in almost total obscurity, they observed a distant glimmering light, and to which they now thought it would be best to direct their steps. They hastily proceeded forward, and passed through an arch-way just opposite the avenue which entered the court of the villa. Having dismounted and entered, they discovered that the elegant colonnade and the marble hall, and, indeed, all the chambers of the villa were desolated and forsaken. On finding that farther progress would be useless, they resolved to return to the shade of some lofty palm trees that were planted in the outer court, and under whose umbrage they seated themselves, and gladly partook of the remains of the repast which had been deposited in the wallet of their guide.

After having partaken of the repast in almost total

silence, Raldino, raising himself from his thoughtful posture, exclaimed—

“This place has not suffered by time, the partial ruins we everywhere see, must have been occasioned, I should think, by some shock of an earthquake. Do you know the history of this place, friend?”

The guide paused for an instant, then looking significantly at Raldino, he said—

“I shall never forget the sad earthquake that destroyed it, Signor; I was then about seventeen. Santa Maria,” he exclaimed, “it was a most terrible, awful, and sad night.”

“Well,” said Raldino, “proceed, and give us a brief account of it.”

“Why, then, you must know,” said the guide, “that the baron Di Lodo lived here at that time, he disappeared at the time, and has never been heard of since. O! Santa Maria, he has committed crimes sufficient to terrify even the very devil himself, and therefore, no one regretted him.”

“The Baron Lodo!” exclaimed Raldino; while Amanda demanded if any other persons suffered at the same time.

“I will tell you all about it, Signora, if you will listen. It was at the hour of midnight. Oh—I recollect it well, when the great shock came: all the family were at rest, and it was thought, safe in bed. Now the Baron’s chamber was in an old tower, which was often wondered at, when there were such fine handsome rooms in the new villa. However, *he* knew best why he never would sleep in the new part of the building. Look,

there is one of the windows of the old ruined chamber yet to be seen, and the door-case too, but the roof, the door, and the floor, have all, as you see, fallen among the ruins. Well, you must know, Signora, that there slept the Baron, and when the great shock came, that part fell first, and under that heap of ruins, Signora, lie the remains of the chamber and wicked Baron, together. No one has ever attempted to dig him out.

Amanda's eyes now involuntarily turned to survey the ruined pile, and as she gazed on that part of the building, her emotion was a second time excited by distinctly observing a person gliding in the perspective of the avenue, whose figure and countenance were those of *Thomo*. *Raldino* also saw him, and immediately followed by the peasant, he rushed forward into the avenue to ascertain the truth. Amanda, fearful of the danger of his being assassinated, loudly called upon him to return. *Raldino* heeded not her intreaties, but resolutely pursued the figure into the ruins.

## CHAPTER XVII.

Now Vengeance ! I am thine again ;  
Fiercely be broke away, nor stoop'd --  
Nor look'd. I come—I come,  
If in this place thou sleep'st to night.

Amanda had waited some time in the greatest suspense, thinking they would return ; when at last, quite terrified at being left alone so long, she endeavoured to follow the same steps Raldino had taken. When having traversed a suit of apartments, the walls of which were quite damp and mouldering away, she passed through the hall and entered a passage which led up a few steps into a large square chamber. Here the sound of fire arms greatly alarmed her, and the dread clashing of swords vibrated through the apartments. Amanda was just going to enter the room whence the noise issued, when a foot-step caused her to draw back ; it was the foot steps of Thomo. She stood quite still, for the very sight of him filled her with horror as he glided across the floor, near where she stood, half concealed in a recess in the wall. He sculked to the opposite side of the room, without perceiving her, crossed the court, and entered the passage. Seeing him stagger very much, and the blood flow from his wounds as he passed, it oc-

curred to her that he was one of the party who had been fighting, and perhaps it was Raldino with whom he had been engaged, and who, even now, might be in the agonies of death.

While these horrid thoughts were rushing across her mind, she was glad to hear the sound of approaching footsteps, and the voice of Raldino calling loudly on the guide to follow him instantly.

The Confessor now entered the room where Amanda was waiting. He was pale and gasping for breath; he passed on quickly through an opposite door, and as she followed and was bidding him beware of Thomo, a pistol was fired; she called loudly on him to return, but could neither see or hear any thing of him or the guide. While hesitating to proceed, a dreadful groan struck on her ear, it approached nearer and nearer, and in a moment a figure all covered with blood, crossed the passage, and rushed into the court. Feeling now predominating over horror or every other sensation, Amanda hastened from the chamber to seek her father, but he was no where to be seen or heard.

Terrified and not knowing which way to go, she sat down on some stone steps that were near her, and endeavoured to compose herself to listen if she could hear any thing of them. After waiting some time, she arose and walked to the foot of the tower. There she perceived a great quantity of blood had been shed. Having followed the traces of it across the old court near to the entrance of the grand avenue, she now became most dreadfully agitated. She could neither see or hear any thing of Raldino or the guide: therefore she thought



struck her, that she had better endeavour to find her way back to the place where they first left her. She was proceeding hastily onward, when she suddenly heard quick steps advancing up the grand avenue, and her name loudly repeated by Raldino.

"Have you seen any one pass this way?" said the Confessor, as he drew near to his daughter.

"Yes," replied Amanda, "and I feared it was yourself, for he was sadly wounded, and I followed this way to see who it was."

"Why, which way did he go?" enquired Raldino, eagerly. "Wounded did you say?"

"Yes, indeed," she replied, "look at yonder track of blood which conducted me hither, and which flowed from his wounds! Think what I should suffer if you had been assassinated, or even if you had been wounded only. Do not, then, I entreat you, pursue him any farther. Oh, spare then yourself, and spare him also."

"What!" spare an assassin!" said Raldino.

"Assassin!" exclaimed Amanda. "Ah! did he ever attempt *your* life?"

"No, not *my* life," answered Raldino, with great agitation; "but let me pass and find him."

"No, my father," fearfully repeated Amanda, "pity him for this time; perhaps he has some time pitied others."

"Spare him! pity him!" exclaimed her father, as his eyes glared wildly around him; "you know not whom you pity, or intercede for. But I hope the wounds he has received this night, will prevent his committing any more crimes."

They now abruptly left the court, and traversed the different passages to the avenue, where they found the guide anxiously waiting with the horses. Raldino knew that Amanda was ignorant of the commission on which Thomo had been employed against her life, although she seemed to have a dread upon her mind that he meditated such an attempt; and his relenting, and apparently feeling reluctance to commit the deed for which he had been engaged against this innocent victim, had induced Raldino to spare him. Now, however, that he had pursued the same rout, and had even followed their steps towards the ruins, he felt suspicious of his intending some evil against them. Raldino knew him, and also knew but too well that he was cruel, and capable of committing any deed of darkness, especially if actuated by any feeling of revenge, or his insatiate love of gain. With the conviction on his mind that in following their steps his designs were evil, he had pursued him into the recesses of the ruins, and having wounded him, he hoped it was mortally, and trusted he had met his fate.

The travellers now mounted their horses, and galloped off full speed. They had continued their route for a considerable distance, till a steep ascent compelled them to relax their speed.

As they now walked their horses, Raldino enquired very minutely respecting the further particulars of the villa they had just left, and if there were any other lives lost except the Baron.

“No, thanks to the blessed saint,” said the guide; “the falling of the old tower gave them all timely warning to quit the house, before the two other shocks fol-

lowed. It is believed that not another individual suffered or was lost, except the old wicked Baron. The Baroness, his lady, was a good soul, and luckily died many years before the accident happened. He had also a daughter, who would have lived too long; but the earthquake which destroyed her father, gave her also her liberty.

Here the Confessor eagerly asked, what distance they were from the next inn, and if the blunderbuss was charged.

“Why as to that, the inn is not a great way off, to be sure; but”, said the peasant, “I am pretty sure, if you knew as much as I do of the man we have left behind us, at the villa, Signor, you would instantly put in a treble charge. He knows me, and he also knows that I could tell but too much about him for his safety. My occupations make me acquainted with something of almost every one’s affairs; for you know bad deeds will out, Signor. When the neighbouring inhabitants first heard the character of this man, and the reports about his wicked deeds, it was so shocking, that they determined—”

“Silence; I have no curiosity on this subject, and desire to hear no more relative to it,” replied the Confessor sternly.

“I beg pardon,” significantly answered the Man, “but I did not think it concerned you.”

“Attend to your business, for which purpose I engaged you,” rejoined Raldino, “and let me hear none of your conjectures in future.”

"Ah! is it so?" said the Guide, cautiously eyeing the Confessor.

However this reproof put an end to the conversation, but it greatly excited the curiosity and fears of Amanda, who from the conduct of her father, felt convinced there existed more connection with Thomo than she had at first suspected.

The party now moved on as quick as the unevenness of the road would permit; each lost in their own private reflections. They now descended a hollow which led to the entrance of the next town, and in their near approach they perceived that a fair was being held in the market-place. The Confessor beheld the motley scene with the utmost ill humour, and bade the Guide lead to the best inn. Gerald, however, attended but little to his directions, and recovering his volubility at the sight of the fair, said—

"Well, Signor, you seem to think nothing at all about the old ruinous palace where we had such a race after that man who would not murder us; I suppose it is this fine fair that has put all about it out of your head; but for all that, perhaps you would like to hear the rest of the story I was going to tell you, when you snapped me up so short. You must hear the story, Signor. But look—see there, Signor, at that Punchenello and the jugler; look there at his tricks! Santa Maria! how quick he has turned a monk into a devil!"

"Hold your peace," exclaimed the enraged Confessor, "and lead us to the Inn."

The Guide shrugged up his shoulders, and led the way. As they passed on, a crowd of persons assembled

at the foot of a platform, stayed their progress. They were performing a tragedy, ridiculous enough, indeed, to excite laughter, but from which the Monk had turned away his eyes, when the Guide seized his arm, in the vehemence of surprise and cried out—

“Look, Signor! behold the villain; see, he has murdered his own daughter!”

The feelings of Raldino at this instant, are not to be described. His whole frame became agitated, and his features distorted. As Amanda gazed at the scene before her, she congratulated herself on having a protecting father, so different to the ill-fated Virginia; when turning her eyes on his countenance, she perceived the strange emotions and workings of his soul. Stung to the very heart, the Confessor cruelly spurred his horse, and soon rode out of sight. Amanda and the peasant following, they soon reached the inn without any farther interruption. The Guide, sadly vexed at the ill usage Raldino had given his beast, vowed it should have some of the best food and straw the place could afford, and Amanda rewarded the humane resolution by giving a ducat towards inducing him to keep his word. The inn being very much thronged, they were obliged to put up with what accommodation they could get; therefore as soon as they had partaken of a slight supper, they retired to rest. Weary and fatigued, Amanda soon fell into a sound sleep, from which she did not awake till a late hour in the morning, she then arose, dressed herself quickly, and descended to view the town, a little before they partook of breakfast, as she found upon enquiry that her father had not yet made his appearance.

As she passed through the town, she perceived preparations were making for the last day's fair. The booths were being fantastically hung with the different merchandise, and the market represented every dainty, and choice fruits that these luxuriant countries abound with. The melon, the grape, the pomegranate, fig, and almond, grow here in great abundance. All seemed bustle and preparation for the festivities of the day, for few people enjoy themselves more than the Italians.

Very differently had the lingering hours moved on with Raldino. He had passed the night without sleep, revolving in his mind the conduct of the guide towards him. There was a simplicity in the manner of the peasant which but ill accorded with the pointed events he had compelled the Confessor to notice. He wished to ascertain if possible what he knew, without suspicion; after which, if he found he knew too much, his death would easily secure the secret.

When Amanda returned, she found her father waiting breakfast for her; she regarded his pale and care-worn countenance with the utmost anxiety; still he said he was well, excepting a little fatigued from the former day's journey.

Gerald was now dispatched to procure fresh horses, that they might proceed as soon as it was possible on their way. The Guide shortly after returned with the information that no horses could be had until the next morning at day break. However disappointed the travellers might feel, there was no other alternative than patience; therefore to amuse and pass the time, Amanda



prevailed upon Raldino to accompany her again to view the town.

It will be absolutely necessary here to give a short description of the manners and customs that still prevail in most catholic countries.

It is still customary on certain days and particular periods for every parish to carry the figure of the Virgin, with all the necessary *et cetera*, through its principal streets. This procession is generally very grand, attended by music and singing boys; which, together with the numerous tapers carried by those who follow, has a very commanding and solemn effect, more especially if seen on a dark night. No person is allowed to turn his back upon this figure, nor is it consistent for these virgins to behave so to each other, if perchance they meet.

It happened that this day was one dedicated to the saint, therefore Raldino and his daughter joined in the procession. As they proceeded slowly and solemnly along the Strada Realle, another procession entered the street at the other end; and consequently the two processions met. 'Twas here they found themselves perplexed, for by the regulations of the church, they could neither pass nor return, as that would be treating each other with disrespect. In this situation they remained for a length of time, undetermined what course to pursue; at length it was mutually resolved to send and ask the Bishop of S \* \* \* \*, and a messenger was accordingly dispatched, who soon returning, brought the Bishop's directions for each party to walk backwards to the end of the street, and then turn to their respective duties. These instructions were punctually followed,



and they parted highly pleased with the good sense and judgement of the Bishop, in recommending a plan, which wonderful to relate they had never thought of. Raldino and his daughter returned to the inn, as she could not prevail upon him to accompany her any farther to view the town after the procession had ended.

We shall here take the opportunity of recording another instance of superstition, among many others that we had already witnessed.

Superstition is more prevalent in Spain than almost any other part of the world, and there was no instance which we had at any time witnessed, that we felt more indignant at than the following:

During our stay at S\* \* \* \*, it chanced to be the season for bathing, which the Spaniards of Andalusia appear particularly fond of. We were walking one evening on the banks of the river, in expectation of meeting a friend who had gone out for the above mentioned recreation, and had already come near enough to speak to him, when one of the party perceived a youth in the middle of the river, who seemed struggling for life, as we supposed, from an attack of the cramp. One of the party immediately ran to his friend, who was not quite dressed, and directed his attention to the person in danger. He instantly stripped off his clothes again, and plunged into the water; but although an excellent swimmer, he was but just in time to catch hold of the hair of his head, by which, after great exertion, he at length succeeded in dragging the unfortunate youth to the shore. By this time a number of Spaniards had collected, with whose assistance he was laid upon the

grass, but the vital spark appeared to have flown for ever. Our friend advised that he should be taken to the nearest house, and laid in a warm bed till medical assistance could be procured; but the Spaniards, with the strongest exclamations of surprise, unanimously opposed it, saying it would be safer and truly much better to carry him to a neighbouring convent, and there place him before the figure of a favourite saint, by whose power he would be restored, if possible; human assistance in their opinion being now vain. As it would have been next to madness for us to have attempted any opposition, he was accordingly carried by them to the first convent, where, after covering him with an old cloak, they left him with no other companion than the wooden image, whose influence was to restore him. But alas! when we enquired the next day what had been the result of this experiment, we found that he had moved his hand, (which when we left him lay by his side,) up to his head, but his spirit had flown for ever.

Such was the end of this unfortunate young man, who, if he had met with proper assistance in the first instance, it is probable he might then have been restored to life. It may naturally be supposed some life was in him, by the altered position of his arm; but this the ignorant and misguided Spaniards attributed to the power of their senseless image.

These are two, out of many instances of catholic superstition.

After Raldino and Amanda had joined in the solemnities of the day, they returned to the inn, where every arrangement having been made for the morning, they

partook a slight repast, and retired to rest, fully intent on pursuing their journey at day break.



## CHAPTER XVIII.

We have no forms beyond the elements,  
Of which we are the mind and principle.  
Bethink thee; is there no other that thou  
Canst make? Be gone; yet stay one moment  
Ere we part.

At night the Confessor called the Guide into his apartment to give him his discharge, having fully made up his mind that he should conduct them no farther. As the man entered, he bid him shut the door.

“I have sent for you,” said Raldino, “to give you your dismissal to night, as I shall have no farther occasion for your services. I also wish to bid you beware of Thomo in returning; though perhaps,” added he, “your report of him is quite erroneous, yet there seems to be a something strange and wonderful in the history you talked of.”

“Ah! Signor, wonderful and strange enough for the matter of that, but—” and he paused for a moment,

“It is a long story,” at length rejoined the peasant,

and now that you are a little civil, I do not mind if you will listen, giving it you."

"Begin then," said the Confessor.

"Well, you must know," said Gerald, "this said man, Thomo, as you call him, came all of a sudden to live in that there house at the sea side, nobody knows how or exactly when he came, and the place has been kept shut up ever since the baron and this man were connected. There is not the least doubt of their having been connected together, because the baron and he were two of the greatest villains existing. Why, Signor, do you look at me so? the baron himself could not have looked worse, if I were telling him the same."

"Do not be so tedious," said the Confessor, "in a churlish and impatient tone.

"Well then, as near as I can recollect the truth I will. To begin the story properly, then, Signor; one dismal night in November, as Paulo Matto, a fisherman, who lived in our town when I was a boy, had been fishing, he staid much too late; it turned out stormy and dark, and as he was trying to make the best of his way along the shore, he and his fish mistook the right path. The thunder rolled and the lightning flashed around, and as the rain beat hard, and the surge threatened every moment to wash him away, he thought it would be most advisable to take shelter under some of the high rocks near him; he did so, and there he lay quite snug until the storm a little abated. He had not been there long, when he spied a dark lantern, and then presently distinguished a man hastily moving along the beach, with a load on his back, tied in a sack; the

weight seemed almost too much for him, and as he approached nearer, he pitched the load on a part of the rock, close to the spot where Paulo lay concealed. He began swearing and muttering something to himself, and old Matto thought directly of robbers, and supposed the sack contained the booty which this man had been plundering. Alarmed a little for his own safety, Paulo lay quite still, although he much wished to know what was inside the sack. The man again took up the load, and staggered away with it, and Matto lost sight of him.

After having staid a considerable time, and the storm seemed to have abated, the old fisherman crept out of his snug birth under the rock, and was hastening home. But he soon had cause to repent, for the tempest came on more violently than before, and there was no shelter to be had. In this quondary, and scarcely knowing where to step in safety, it was so excessively dark, he thought he perceived at some distance a light; he made up to it, and saw it was at a house by the side of the beach. On approaching the door, he knocked twice, but nobody came; then leaning close against the door to shelter off the rain, which fell in torrents, it gave way and let him in of itself. The room was quite dark, and he wandered about to find another door if there was one. He soon found the entrance into another apartment, where there were some embers on the hearth, not quite extinguished. Paulo now drew them together, and presently after, as he stood warming himself by the fire, a man entered with a light; he told him how he got in, and asked for a shelter during the storm. The man turned as pale as death, and seemed much agitated; and

the old man, thinking he might get turned out, presented him with some very fine fish for his supper. This proved a good scheme of Paulo's, for the man instantly laid some fresh fuel on the fire to dress the fish. The fire soon blazed up, and then it was that Matto suspected he was the same man he had seen on the rock; but when he spied the sack lying in the corner, he was quite sure. Now this man—"

"This man was doubtless the aforesaid Thomo," said the Confessor, "and the house on the sea shore the same you mentioned before!"

"Shrewdly guessed," said the Guide, significantly, "though, to say the truth, I thought I need not tell you that."

"Go on," said Raldino.

"Well, then, to proceed. The fire burnt up, and presently after, Thomo went out of the room to get his apparatus for cooking the fish; he took care to take the light with him. Now, thinks Paulo, the fire light will shew what he has got in the sack, and so the opportunity must not now be lost. Well, he went to the sack, and he raised it up, Signor, but he could not hold it; so he loosed it, and down it fell again upon the floor. He has got a rich prize here, thought Paulo, as he stooped and untied the string that fastened the mouth of the sack; he opened it a little way to feel what was in, and Signor, what do you think he felt? why dead flesh! and he saw the face of a corpse, Signor! Ah! poor Paulo was almost a corpse himself with the fright that came over him. He looked—aye, he looked as you do now, Signor; and heartily wished he had never gone



near the sack. Fearing for the consequences of the discovery, he instantly made his escape from the house before the man returned, regardless of the storm, which now raged with the greatest fury, or any other danger that might await him. Poor Paulo alternately ran and walked through the drenching rain till he reached home; when, what with fright, fatigue, and the wet, he caught so severe a cold and fever, that he was dangerously ill many months. It was not till after his recovery that he said a word or little about what he had seen, and Thomo had then left the house, and nobody knew what was become of him. It was a very long time after that event, ere Thomo again made his appearance, and every body found the hamlet was afraid of him. Now the strangest part of the story, and which is only half finished, lies here; and when I first heard it, I was so terrified, it made my hair stand an end. You must know when—”

“I will listen no longer,” said the Confessor, to this man’s brainless tale: so here is your money, and you may depart immediately.”

“Signor,” replied the Guide, “if you did not know the story already, you would not let me go without your hearing it to the end, so there is my opinion, Signor.”

“Mark me;” said Raldino, “that I hear no more of your opinion on the subject. Though no credit is due to your idle history, I think this same Thomo to be some desperado, and he may attempt your life as you return by the villa, if I have not prevented him doing any more harm. Therefore, in addition to your fire-arms, I give you this stiletto.”

The Guide would have refused the dagger, but the



arguments and look of Raldino forced him not to return it; so placing it in his girdle, he prepared to depart.

Raldino and the peasant had conversed till it was day break; therefore, as Gerald quitted the room, he desired him to send in the landlord, as he meant to get all ready to proceed immediately to Rome. This, however, was only an act of deception on the part of Raldino, who, as soon as the Guide was gone, instantly departed, and proceeded for several hours on the road to Naples.

They now halted to dine at a large inn near the environs of that city, and Raldino enquired what convents were in the vicinity. This was a question that greatly alarmed Amanda, who earnestly intreated and represented to her father, that it would be more congenial to her wishes, if he would suffer her to return to the Villa Altieri, and enter the convent Della Martino, than to place her in any convent ever so remote, where it would be necessary for him to introduce her.

“There is only one objection as to the adoption of your plan,” replied Raldino, “and that is, the danger of being traced by the Marchioness di Salvo, whose inveterate disposition would proceed to the most cruel extremities on such a discovery.”

Amanda expressed her gratitude in the strongest terms for his kindness, and for the concern he felt for her safety and happiness, and hoped he would not withhold his consent to allow her to run the hazard of a discovery. His objections were overruled by her intreaties, and counterbalanced by the consideration that the convent Della Martino was large, and that the abbess and the sisters were not indifferent to Amanda’s happiness and security.

As soon, therefore, as they had finished the repast, the horses were got ready, and they proceeded on their way, keeping in an indirect rout to the city. As the carriage drew near Naples, and the bay unfolded itself to her view, how affecting, how overwhelming, where the sensations and feelings of Amanda. Every object reminded her of her dear aunt, of Di Salvo, and past happiness; and the Confessor read in her expressive countenance, the feelings that were within. To avoid notice they took a carriage, and reached Villa Altieri at the close of the evening. On knocking at the portal, Annetta, the old housekeeper, directly appeared at the door, and was almost beside herself with joy at the sight of her young mistress, returned home again in health and safety, and welcomed her with every demonstration of affection. The Confessor alighted and entered the house for the purpose of re-assuming his monk's habit. He now informed Amanda that he should see her no more till a proper opportunity presented itself of his acknowledging her as his daughter. That in the mean time he should perhaps write to her, and she might address him in return, under a fictitious name, (which he should give her) at a place remote from his convent. He then bade her, as she valued her safety, her happiness, and every thing dear to her; and above all, his future protection and regard, not to disclose the secret of her birth. He particularly charged her not to disclose to any individual where she had been, or who it was that had been instrumental in her being taken from the Villa Altieri: to bid Annetta be silent as to his return, and to retire the following morning at an early hour to

the convent Della Martino. He then bid her farewell, and repaired immediately to the Dominican convent of San Spirito, and entered as a brother just returned from a distant pilgrimage.

Amanda did not retire to rest, but accompanied by Annetta, she felt a pleasing melancholy pervade her mind, as she wandered through the different apartments of the Villa. She took up her lute, laid it down again with some other precious articles to take with her, not daring to touch its strings.

Annetta gave her an account of Di Salvo's visit the next day after she was taken away, which agitated her exceedingly ; but it proved to her the sincerity of his affection, and recalled to her mind most affectingly and poignantly their separation at the chapel on the lake of Celano. How did she wish to know his fate, for Annetta had informed her that he had been absent from home ever since the day he left Altieri. Fervently offering up a prayer for his safety and happiness, she busied herself in preparing for her departure at day break.

On her arrival at the convent, she was most joyfully received by the sisters, and affectionately embraced and welcomed by the Lady Abbess, who on learning it was Amanda's wish to remain silent for the present, with regard to her mysterious disappearance, forebore to ask any questions, but promised her every secrecy and security in the asylum she had chosen, under her immediate protection. As it was with the consent, and agreeable to the injunctions of her father, that Amanda had entered the convent Della Martino, she in a few days recovered some degree of composure of mind, from her late terrors

and fatigue, and became comparatively happy and resigned. She found herself beloved, esteemed, and kindly treated by the abbess and the sisterhood. The convent was enchantingly situated, and its grounds were laid out by art and nature in melancholy splendour; and here would she wander for hours, and muse upon Di Salvo's uncertain fate.

One evening she had strayed to a favourite spot with her lute, and as its sweet sounds floated on the air, she thought of the happy hours she had spent at Villa Altieri; she also recollected with feelings indescribable the evening when she was surprised in the pavilion, by Di Salvo's responding to her lute; and of the many happy hours that succeeded in his beloved society. The moon now shone forth with resplendent beauty, and as she gazed upon the orb of evening, she touched the chords of her lute, and sang the following beautiful lines, with an exquisitely sweet, yet melancholy voice.

Here, by the moon's soft, silv'ry light,  
Musing on long departed days,  
I turn a sad and fearful gaze  
On what may be; my future fate,  
Shall on my pilgrimage await.

Now while I view thy lovely ray,  
Night's Regent! thy unholy sway,  
Dark, melancholy, cheerless holds,  
And to my startled mind unfolds

Dim scenes of misery severe,  
That check with their excess the tear.

Yet once my youthful thoughts were bright  
As lovely moon, thy splendid light;  
And ah, as transient! Soon, full soon  
Shall be obscured thy beams, O Moon,  
E'en so my fortune. Once I thought  
My life with every pleasure fraught.

Not empty pleasures, (causeless joy,)  
That in enjoyment, sickening, cloy,  
But such as should unchanged remain,  
Secured by Love's delightful reign;  
With cheerful sun and splendors gay,  
Nor seen those lovely charms decay.

For ere day's middle course be run,  
The skies are dark, the warmth is gone;  
And gathering tempests angry growl,  
And rising winds portentous howl,  
And darkness comes with thicker shades,  
Till one wild storm the whole pervades.

Amanda was now joined by two of the favourite sisters, who accompanied her to the evening vespers. After the service was ended, she retired to her room. There she sat lost in reflection till a late hour, and mused upon the past events; and when her thoughts wandered to the dwelling she had been confined in on

the sea shore, she shrunk with horror from her relationship to Raldino, from whom day after day elapsed without receiving any letter. She thought of the Marchioness Di Salvo with horror and detestation, and regretted that she should be the parent of him on whom she had placed her heart's best affections, although there did not appear the slightest prospect of their ever meeting again. The Marchioness presented an insuperable bar to her union with Di Salvo. The dreadful diabolical disposition she had evinced, and her vile, haughty, designing character, had been sufficiently developed in the late events to make her detested. But what would have been her suffering, her agony of mind, had she known, or even suspected that her father was the principal author of all the late cruelty and persecution she had endured! for it was he alone who had advised and instigated to the perpetration of such crime. From this knowledge, however, she was happily spared, and although she could not bring her mind to think of him with the slightest degree of affection or regard, she still felt grateful for his having restored her to a place of safety, for having consented to her return to the the convent Della Martino.

She had waited now some tedious months, in the anxious expectation of hearing from Raldino; and as he had mentioned the name of Di Salvo on their journey through the forest, she fondly hoped when he did write, he would again name him, and that he would give her some information respecting him. But time passed away, and still no information, either with regard to her father or Rosano arrived. From the knowledge of his fate, as

well as Di Salvo's real situation, she was spared; and hence awaited in hopeful uncertainty the issues of futurity.



## CHAPTER XIX.

In a form of such beauty can evil reside?  
Can a face of such loveliness countenance sin?  
Yes. Foul is the demon yon structure doth hide,  
And dire are the passions that rankle within.

From the hour that the Marchioness di Salvo parted from the Confessor Raldino, she had never known peace of mind or happiness; so true is the saying, that a guilty conscience needs no accuser. Should Raldino be able to accomplish the death of Amanda, still the fear of the dark and cruel deed being discovered, haunted her continually. She had already proved by experience that Rosano would never rest till he had again discovered the place of Amanda's confinement, or by bribes and intreaties gained intelligence of her cruel and unhappy fate. When the thought of Thomo rushed across her mind, the fear that he should for the love of gain spare the life of Amanda and give her liberty, or betray the intended murder and save her, instead of accomplishing it; these overwhelming thoughts made her very soul die



within her. Gladly would she now have made any sacrifice to have recalled the barbarous deed, but now it was too late to repent; that deed was perhaps already perpetrated. Distracted with the agonies of an upbraiding conscience, and with the fearful state of suspense and uncertainty, she anxiously awaited the return of the Confessor. The Marquis, too, whose health was visibly declining, through grief and anxiety on account of his son, was another source of anguish to her heart. Yet she hoped to hear tidings of Di Salvo, and that he was safe and well when Raldino should return. The Marchioness was still beautiful and in the meridian of life; her passions were strong, but she had no judgment to guide her actions. It was weak; her will was law; and being proud, haughty, and overbearing to her dependents, they instantly acquiesced in all her wishes, and obeyed her from fear, instead of either love or respect. She was most extravagantly fond of gaiety and splendour; had always been reared in the greatest affluence, and spoiled by an excess of indulgence; therefore, never having known the least privation herself, she did not feel for the wants of others. The continual dread and uncertainty of mind under which she laboured, added to the natural irritability of her disposition, had so preyed upon her mind and body, that her health had become very impaired. To divert her thought from dwelling too much upon the uncertainty of Amanda and her son, the Marchioness di Salvo visited her magnificent villa, situated on the banks of the bay of Naples. There immersed in folly and dissipation, she for a while forgot her crimes, and that ere a few more re-

volving moons had passed over her head, she would be called upon to yield up an account of her evil deeds.

Cards had been issued out some time to invite all the neighbouring nobility and gentry around to a grand fete, which was to be given at the Villa Nuova. Every preparation was now making for a grand masquerade and ball, and the entertainments were to be most sumptuous and splendid. At an early hour on the evening appointed for the gala, the party assembled in the gardens and orange groves that surrounded the Villa. The apartments and groves were lighted up by innumerable variegated lamps. While the unclouded radiance of the moon beautifully illumined and added to the brilliancy and magnificence of the festive scene. Scarcely a breeze disturbed the foliage of the trees, nor any sounds save those of harmony, the hum of happy mortals, and the most enchanting music, interrupted the stillness of the night. Now and then as the music ceased for a moment, the soft murmurings of a gentle rivulet, which meandering through the grounds, stole upon the ear, and added interest to the scene.

Very early in the evening, two masks entered the grounds by a private door at the bottom of the garden, situated at some distance from the Villa, and from the different parties already assembled; and as they remarked the beauty of the evening to each other, and it being still early, and not half the company having arrived yet, they agreed to take a walk together, previous to their joining the company. They struck into a path which led to the banks of the river, and pursued their way by its winding side. The moonbeams darting

through the branches that shaded the brink of the stream, played on the surface of the water, whose transparent bosom reflected the glittering host of stars which spangled the face of heaven. All nature was hushed into calmness; the distant music alone broke on the ear, sometimes in soft and plaintive melody, at others, raising the heart by its exultating strains.

The extreme warmth of the weather, it being a lovely autumnal evening, made this walk peculiarly delightful, and invited the friends to lengthen their ramble. They had gained a spot at a considerable distance, which by its romantic loveliness led them to pause and rest awhile. They had not been long seated, when a strain of music, very near them, at once grand, solemn, and impressive, floated in the air, and seemed calculated by its enchanting melody to entrance the senses of the hearer. They instantly arose and gently approaching nearer to the spot from whence the sounds proceeded, they distinctly heard the following beautiful lines sung in the most impressive manner.

### THE WITHERED TREE.

Old Tree, thou art wither'd; I pass'd thee last year,  
And the sweet birds sing hid in thy branches did sing,  
Thy shadows stretch'd over the grass sprouting near,  
And thou wert as green as thy mates of the spring.

How alter'd since then! not a leaf hast thou got,  
Thy honours brown round thee, that clothed the tree;

The clown passeth by thee and heedeth thee not,  
But thou'rt a warm source of reflection for me.

I think while I view thee, and rest here from toil,  
Life's bloom is as frail as the leaves thou hast shed;  
Like thee I may boast of my honours awhile,  
But new springs may blossom, and mine may be fled.

Fond friends may bend o'er the rais'd turf where I'm  
laid,  
And warm recollection the past may look o'er,  
And say by my life, as I say by thy shade,  
"Last spring he was living, but now he's no more."

As the music ceased, the friends looked towards the spot from whence it had proceeded, and discovered two figures sitting on a rough stone seat, very near to the bridge which led over the stream to the orange groves. The sound of voices now made them hesitate, and not wishing to be discovered or interrupted in their walk, they struck into another path and bent their steps towards the Villa. They had not proceeded far when they were interrupted by the sound of voices, as in earnest conversation, and presently saw the same two figures leaning over the bridge. As they could not pass without being seen, they paused. The one figure, from his voice and appearance, which was that of a pilgrim past the meridian of life, held in his hands a lute, and they were convinced it was him whom they had just heard sing the above lines. The other figure was much younger from

his appearance. He was habited in a black domino. They were in earnest conversation, and on a nearer approach, the younger one was heard to say—

“You may depend on my assistance in making the discovery, if it is possible. If there is any truth or foundation in the report, I am sorry to be obliged to confess my knowledge of many improprieties in her conduct; but you know my heart, and must feel convinced that the only motive I can have for what I say, proceeds from pure and disinterested friendship.”

“I also know—”

“Yes, you also know, and are at least not unacquainted with her passions,” replied the Pilgrim, sighing deeply; “and they have never been controlled from her cradle. Well, my friend, may it be said, that the passions often lead us into error, because they fix our attention on that particular part of the object which they present, not allowing us to view it on every side. A king passionately affects the title of conqueror. Victory, says he, calls me to the remotest part of the earth. I shall gain the victory; I shall load mine enemy with chains, and the terror of my name, like an impenetrable rampart, will defend the entrance of my empire. Inebriated with this hope, he forgets that fortune is inconstant and that the victor shares the load of misery, almost equally with the vanquished. He does not perceive that the welfare of his subjects is only a pretext for his martial phrenzy, and that while he forges his arms and displays his ensigns, his whole attention is fixed on the pomp of the triumph.”

“Exactly so,” was the reply.

The Pilgrim continued. "Fear, equally powerful with pride, will produce the same effect ; it will raise ghosts and phantoms, and disperse them among the tombs, and in the darkness of the woods present them to the eyes of the affrighted traveller, and seize on all the faculties of his soul, without leaving any one at liberty to reflect on the absurdity of the motives for such ridiculous terror. The passions not only fix the attention on particular sides of the objects which they present to us, but they also deceive us by exhibiting the same objects when they really do not exist. Illusion is a necessary effect of the passions, the strength or force of which is generally measured by the obscurity into which they lead us. When Ambition has kindled a war between two parties, with what readiness have we given credit to the bad news; and on the other side, what incredulity with regard to the good. How often do we prove that a past folly is seldom sufficient to show to mankind their present folly and error. So you will find it will prove in the present instance. But as I can with confidence rely, so I shall depend upon your friendship and assistance in this unhappy affair," said the Pilgrim.

"You may rely with every confidence," answered the other mask.

They now left the spot, and walked into the orange grove.

They heard no more, as the two figures struck into the other path. The pair who had been listening to the conversation of the two strangers were Lozaro di Gracio, the friend who first rambled with Di Salvo to the ruins of Paluzzi and the lady Janetta Durazzo, the

sister of Lorio. Upon his first meeting with the lively and interesting Janetta, Lozaro had been much charmed with the graces of her person, and the elegance of her manners; and their intimacy was now ripened into a mutual and lasting attachment, sanctioned by the consent of their parents. This happy pair now took their way towards the Villa, to join the merry group assembled there. As they retraced their steps through the groves they entertained each other by admiring the beauties of nature.

"How very charming is this evening," observed Janetta, "an air refreshing, yet warm, meets me, so gentle that it is not like air, for it does not stir a leaf of this orange tree. No, not a leaf moves, but the fragrance of the blossoms seem to come in the breeze to us; if we were the only beings in creation, and every thing had been formed to render us happy, it could not have been otherwise than it is at this moment."

"Ah, Janetta," replied Lozaro, "I can explain to thee why nature's aspect is so lovely now to me, perhaps, too, it may account for the happy calm that pervades thy mind."

"Do, my dear Lozaro."

"Why, it is the uninterrupted enjoyment of each other's society." He tenderly embraced her.

They now drew near the party. It was impossible to conceal the lovely form of Janetta, which, on this occasion, though artlessly attired, displayed itself to the utmost advantage. A robe of white silk fell in graceful folds around her elegant form, fastened at the bosom by a pearl ornament; a silken cord confined her



waist ; and her arms were ornamented with bracelets of pearls, whilst a bodkin prevented her redundant tresses from falling on her shoulders ; those which shaded her forehead, dividing, displayed its snowy whiteness. A white veil entirely obscured her countenance ; and thus arrayed in beautiful simplicity, she unintentionally excited general admiration. As they approached the Villa, the doors of the banquet room were thrown open, from whence issued a blaze of light which amply supplied the short absence of the moon, whose lustre was sometimes for a moment obscured by a passing cloud. Parties were formed ; some dancing, others walking in the garden, and some reclining as spectators. On the whole, nothing was wanting to complete the enchantment of the fête to the visitors : but to the Marchioness it was productive of no real pleasure. 'Tis true the enchantment and happiness of those around her amused her at intervals ; but thought, busy thought would obtrude itself ; and the repeated enquiries after Di Salvo made her at other times very gloomy and thoughtful.

As Lozaro and Janetta entered the gardens, they perceived two figures in masks, sitting in earnest conversation under one of the almond trees, and behind the shrubs was another figure, apparently listening to what they were saying.

Janetta, observing them, said, she felt convinced one was the Marchioness.

As she was making the remark, the one that had been listening, suddenly disappeared, and his place was supplied by another mask ; they now perceived that this fi-

figure was the Pilgrim whom they had seen and heard conversing during their walk. He seemed to be listening with great attention to what was being said, when suddenly the Marchioness (for it was her) fell senseless to the ground. Her companion had instantly disappeared, and as Lozaro and Janetta approached for the purpose of rendering them assistance, the other figure, which they now perceived was the one habited in the black domino, came forward to her assistance also. It was long before their united efforts could recal her to life. When she opened her eyes, she gazed wildly around her, as if in search of some object, and again closed them in insensibility. They now endeavoured to convey her by a private path to the Villa; but ere she arrived there, she began to recover sufficiently to enquire where they were conveying her to. She was now conducted to a small private apartment, where she desired she might be left alone for a short time.

As the day began to dawn, the assembly broke up, and the different parties left the Villa. One mask alone remained, who presenting a sealed packet to the Marchioness's favorite attendant, requested that might be presented to her Mistress immediately. Ursula instantly returned, and conducted the stranger to her mistress's apartment.

From the time Lozaro and Janetta had left her, she sat lost in gloomy reflection at the mysterious voice she had heard behind her in the garden, and which had warned her to prepare to answer for her crimes and misconduct. The Marquis had long suspected her guilty of infidelity, and he had that night proved by ocular de-

monstration, that his suspicions were not without foundation. He also believed she knew and was also in part the cause of Amanda's disappearing in the sudden manner reported. But what grieved him most poignantly was the lengthened absence and the great uncertainty of fate of his beloved and only child. It was the Marquis di Salvo who in the habit of a pilgrim had so unexpectedly detected the infidelity of his wife, and had taken that opportunity to warn her of her crimes and misconduct; and he sincerely hoped the effect his warning voice had that night had upon her mind, might make her sensible of her misconduct for the future.

With regard to his rival, as soon as he returned to the palace Di Salvo, he dispatched a trusty messenger with a warning to him, either to quit Naples immediately, or meet him to render satisfaction for his treacherous conduct and violation of friendship. No answer was returned, therefore the Marquis felt satisfied it was his intention instantly to quit Naples.

He now seldom or never saw the Marchioness, and if they ever met, their behaviour was cool and distant to each other. The conduct of the one proceeded from wounded honour, the other from self reproach and conscious guilt.

The masked stranger who was introduced into the apartment of the Marchioness, at villa Nuova, was Raldino. He had heard on his arrival at the San Spirito convent, that the Marchioness was at villa Nuova, and that there was to be a masked entertainment on the following evening. He therefore determined to visit her then, as it would better answer his purpose, and accord

with his feelings, than by attending her at the palace Di Salvo. For this reason he obtained a mask, and after the matin vespers, he hastened with all possible speed to Villa Nuovo, and arrived just as the assembly had broken up, and were returning home.

When Ursula introduced Raldino into the apartment the Marchioness rose to receive him; and he became dreadfully agitated as he took the extended hand of the willing murderer of his child. Some few introductory flatteries followed; after which a pause of some minutes ensued. Pale and trembling the Marchioness dreaded to ask if Amanda's death remained unaccomplished, and the father shrunk from an avowal of the disappointment. He sat meditating on the best way of introducing the subject, and of naming her noble family, when the impatient Marchioness commenced the discourse by saying—

“Tell me, father of consolation,” said she, “is the cause of my misery removed? Relieve me from suspense! You hesitate! Tell me, have you accomplished the deed? Is she sacrificed to the debt of justice?”

The Marchioness saw the countenance of Raldino torn by a variety of contending passions, during these hasty questions; and her own feelings and alarm becoming almost insupportable, she again repeated the questions with great vehemence—

“She is spared!” at length said Raldino, “and you have nothing to apprehend.”

“Spared!” exclaimed the Marchioness, “spared! and

I have nothing to apprehend! What is this enigma, father?"

"No enigma, Lady, but plain fact, at which *I do*, and indeed at which we both should heartily rejoice; for the honour of your son is secured, and a horrid sacrifice prevented."

Raldino then entered into a long detail of the different particulars, and unfolded many circumstances and events relative to Amanda's family, most artfully concealing their proximity to himself: he then ventured to hope she would seriously consider the affair in a different light, and that the unhappiness of her son would be relieved and removed, by her finally permitting the nuptials with an object who was now known to be worthy his alliance; and who in every sense of the word would prove an ornament and an happiness to his family. He then added, that when he believed to the contrary, he hoped she would give him credit for having most strenuously opposed their marriage: but now that his prejudices were removed, he trusted that the Marchioness' good sense would no longer oppose or persecute Di Salvo and Amanda.

Without condescending to reply, either to his argument or remonstrance, the Marchioness enquired whether Amanda had any suspicion of the design for which she had been carried into the forest of Garganno; or had the least knowledge of who was her persecutor.

To all these hurried questions the Monk cautiously replied in the negative; and was then asked, what was become of Amanda, or how was she disposed of? He parried these questions by turning the discourse to Di

Salvo; but he carefully avoided hinting in the least at his real situation in the Inquisition. Neither the Marquis or the Marchioness doubted that Di Salvo was in pursuit of Amanda, or that he would return until he had either rescued or discovered the place of her confinement. The Marquis, from real affection and anxiety at his long absence, had dispatched several persons in search of him, but they had returned without bringing any tidings of his fate. Before the Confessor, however, departed from the Villa, the Marchioness again reverted to the actual residence of Amanda, and more particular information respecting her rank and pedigree; but the keen Confessor affirmed that Amanda's asylum was hidden from every one but himself, and lay at a great distance from Naples, at a place which he fictitiously named, and that when she made her appearance again to the public, it would be under her real name, rank, and character. But she wished to know before he departed, what circumstance it was that led to a discovery of her birth.

That he told her must remain sacred for the present, that she might rest satisfied, no discovery had been made, nor had any event transpired that could in the least alarm her. He pledged his honour that Amanda was totally ignorant of the design that had been formed against her life.

After some general conversation they parted: the Confessor determined and firmly bent upon accomplishing the object he had hitherto so designedly and cruelly opposed and prevented. He resolved without her know-

ledge or consent, and with as little delay as possible, to effect the marriage he saw she still detested.

The Marchioness, on the other hand, was racked with the most torturing surmise at the state of uncertainty and suspense in which he had left her. His agitated and prevaricating manner on their meeting, had excited the strongest and most alarming suspicion in her guilty mind, that all was not right, and as she wished and expected it would be; therefore she determined on her arrival at the palace Di Salvo, where she meant to go that day, to summon Raldino and oblige him to satisfy her mind more fully with regard to Amanda, or to threaten him with the consequences attendant on a refusal. With her mind thus impressed, she was firmly resolved to withdraw imperceptibly her confidence from Raldino, and obtain a more confidential agent.



## CHAPTER XX.

With sudden start he turn'd,  
And pointed to the distant gloom. Then,  
While pale and mute he stood, listening,  
Nor moved, till in this silent hour,  
Lights like channel meteors, suddenly burn'd,  
And startled him as from a momentary trance.

While the late events had been passing in the Garganus and at Naples, Di Salvo and his servant, Bardo,



remained closely imprisoned and very strongly guarded in the different chambers of the Inquisition. On the days appointed by the court they were separately examined. When Bardo was called up before their awful tribunal, it was some time before he could recover himself sufficiently to answer the questions that were put to him; for such was the fright that took possession of every faculty, on his entering the court chamber, that he stood like a statue, with his eyes fixed and every joint immovable. When he did recover the power of speech, the Inquisitors were astonished at his behaviour, for he maintained his master's innocence with an indignation and honesty, such as they had most probably never experienced before. There were two officers stationed to note down with the greatest exactness every sentence which he uttered. And when he was being conducted from the tribunal, he paused and gazed around on the assembly with such an expressive look, as made them gaze at each other in mute astonishment.

When Rosano was again brought before the court, every art was tried to make him confess his crimes, and if possible to draw from him a discovery of others. The Inquisitors were particularly careful in avoiding to inform him by the slightest hint of the accusation on which he was arrested. This, however, he had learnt from the officers who conducted him from the chapel of San Sebastiano, as well as from the monks at the Benedictine convent, and which, they informed him was for carrying off a nun from her convent.

During his second examination, he was asked many questions irrelevant to the crime of which he was accu-

sed, and was detained so long in the court, that he was at last obliged to be taken out, being quite faint and exhausted. At the end of the trial he was threatened with the torture, and again dismissed to prison. On the way to this dreadful abode, as they were conducting him along one of the gloomy passages, a person passed by him from one of the adjoining avenues, whose figure and air convinced him it was the same mysterious, the same prophetic monk who had haunted the ruins of Paluzzi, and had so often warned him. Before Di Salvo could sufficiently recover from the surprise and consternation into which the sudden sight of the Monk had thrown him, he had disappeared, and he in vain entreated his guard to let him pursue the stranger. That he should be within these dark and gloomy walls, was a most convincing proof that he pursued him for some purpose or other, but whether good or evil, time only could elucidate.

As they proceeded along the avenue to the dungeon, a half stifled groan sometimes swelled upon the ear.

Di Salvo, shuddering, enquired whence it proceeded.

"They come from the dungeons of torture, replied the Guard. "Those groans you hear, come from the prisoners who are undergoing the punishment due for their crimes, and for guilty deeds they will not confess. We sometimes bring prisoners this way from the tribunal, and to this spot to hear these groans, that they may know what they are to undergo and suffer, if they will not confess, repent, and be saved."

"But suppose they have no crimes to confess," said Di Salvo, "what then?"

"What then?" said the man, looking earnestly at Rosano, "why they had better say what they do know, it is better for them then not to say any thing at all."

Di Salvo did not ask any more questions, and was led to his dungeon, where he remained several days without any interruption, except his guard, who brought a little food and changed the expiring lamp for one that but dimly lighted his gloomy and terrific apartment.

It was a third time summoned before the assembly, and dismissed as before, without their coming to any conclusion, or the least evidence appearing against him, that was considered as amounting to final condemnation.

On the fourth time of his attendance at the table of the Holy Office, after a period of four week's close confinement in his dungeon, an unusual solemnity pervaded the chamber, and a larger assembly appeared to conduct the proceedings. As no proof of Di Salvo's innocence had been brought forward or obtained, any farther than what his servant Barlo had adduced, he was ordered by the senior judge to be put to the question within three hours, and removed to his gloomy cell.

About midnight he was startled by a loud confused talking in the avenue, very near to the door of his apartment. He listened attentively, but could hear nothing more than a capote which seemed enter his dungeon. At last, having settled who it was to be, the door was unlocked by a person, habited in long black gown, and he entered with a light, threw over him a white cloth, and long ornaments, and escorted him from his cell. After passing through several long winding

avenues, they came to one more spacious than those they had passed. At the end of this passage was a pair of large iron barred folding doors, which one of the guides approaching, rang a bell, and they were immediately opened and let into a large gloomy chamber, the walls of which were hung with black, and illuminated only by one faint glimmering lamp. When the mantle was withdrawn, the different instruments of torture presented themselves to his view, in various parts of the room, and dreadful forms slunk by him in the music of groans and half stifled murmurs.

A heavy bell now sounded its lengthened peals, and his conductors hurried him through this chamber, to the most remote part of this extensive cavern of death, where the Inquisitors had taken their seats. As Di Salvo approached this awful assembly, he perceived in the centre, the grand Vicar, the Advocate, and the ordinary Inquisitor, seated under a black canopy, who appeared to preside as directors of the torturers. A long pause ensued, during which, each figure sat with his eyes fixed on a death's head, and muttering some incoherent sentences to himself. In the mean time Rosano endeavoured to compose his feelings and to fortify his mind to meet the events of the awful night.

At some short distance from the state chair, stood a large iron frame, most probably a rack: beside which was placed on a stool a black coffin.

As the door of the cavern opened for the rest of the assembly to take their seats, the piercing throw of some mangled being rushed upon the ear and petrified the senses. The grand Vicar now took his seat; on his





right hand sat the Advocate, on the left the ordinary Inquisitor. At each end of the table sat the two Notaries, and at certain distances from each other, stood the four and twenty Inquisitors, dressed in their black robe: who formed the jury: each held a small crucifix in his hand, on which his eyes were fixed until the judge should speak.

The bell which had been tolling from the time the court began to assemble, now ceased; and each taking out his scroll or book, the grand Vicar arose from his seat and moved a few paces forward. In this court of the infernal regions, Di Salvo was now arraigned at the bar, and solemnly called upon by the grand Inquisitor, to confess his guilt and not prevaricate, but avoid the sufferings that awaited him.

Rosano now stepped forward, and in a manly tone of voice, said—

“I am innocent of all crime. If to escape these terrific preparations of torture and death, I were to confess myself guilty, would your rack or your tortures alter the truth? would heaven find me guilty because suffering had supplied the place of evidence? The consequences, therefore, of your tortures and injustice be upon your own heads.”

A pause of some minutes ensued. The grand Vicar had listened attentively. At length the Inquisitor in ordinary made a signal to the notary Officers to immediately prepare for the question. During this interval the mysterious stranger of Paluzzi stalked gently across the chamber, casting a penetrating glance around on the assembly, and then abruptly disappeared at a door leading



to the vaults at the farther end of the cavern. Di Salvo would have followed him, but was prevented, and his enquiries concerning him were suddenly prevented by the Officers, who bound him with strong cords, and threw a black garment over his whole figure, which instantly prevented his seeing any thing, or observing what was preparing for him. In this state he was led to the bar again, when the Inquisitor thus interrogated him—

“Did you ever insult a catholic minister in the church of the San Spirito at Naples?”

“While he was performing an act of holy penance, and which he was compelled by your conduct to leave unfinished?” added a loud hollow voice.

Di Salvo instantly started at the sound, for it was the same mysterious and prophetic voice of the monk of Paluzzi. The same voice again demanded—

“Where did you first see Amanda Lusinette? Why did you not attend to the warning voice at Paluzzi?”

Di Salvo now firmly answered—

“I was warned by the voice that now has spoken. You it was who foretold Signora Marietta’s death. You are the father Raldino, my secret enemy, my accuser, and whom I confess to have insulted in the church of San Spirito at Naples, for the wrongs done to Amanda Lusinette!”

The court seemed now greatly confused, and the grand Vicar loudly demanded who had interrogated the prisoner, “that he answers to questions which we have not asked?”

A confused noise now succeeded, and when it subsided, the Monk’s voice was again heard.

"Thus much I declare," it said, speaking to Di Salvo, "I am not the father Raddino."

Di Salvo doubted of what he had just before asserted, and earnestly addressed the mysterious Stranger, and begged he would reveal his name and the motives for his previous strange conduct.

"Who is this among us?" again demanded the grand Vicar, in an awfully imperative tone of voice; but no answer was returned.

After waiting a considerable time and nothing further having transpired to elucidate the mystery to the court, as to whom it was that had caused this interruption, the grand Vicar ordered the veil to be taken off Di Salvo, and he was reconducted back to his cell. There, stretched upon his floor of straw, he weighed the identity of the figure at Palezzi with the father Raddino, and ended his enquiry in doubt and perplexity. After resting his weary limbs for a short time, he then paced his dreary room to and fro. He now found his confinement worse than before. He thought he felt his narrow apartment strike damp to him, and unable to repose, he paced it until the evening dawned through the crevices in the walls. He then threw himself on his bed of straw, and sank into a sort of forgetfulness of his woes.

As he slept he dreamed that the Stranger haunted him; that he entered his apartment, and lifting up his cowl, displayed a countenance he had never before seen. Again, he thought he was lying on his bed, when he beheld the same figure standing at his side, he drew a small poniard from the folds of his garment, and pointed with an awful frown to the spots which discoloured the

blade; when uttering some awful broken voice, the import of which so terrified him in his sleep, that he awoke in the greatest terror: but how dreadfully was his alarm increased when on opening his eyes and looking around him, he by the faint glimmering of the lamp perceived the reality of the vision standing before him.

The Stranger seeing him awake, now advanced nearer, and presented to his astonished sight the same countenance he had before seen in his dream. Di Salvo started from his bed, and demanded in a faltering voice—

“Who are you?”

“You have been spared for this night,” said the Stranger. Ask no questions, but if you wish to see me again, I charge you take this warning and answer me. Do you know the Confessor, or father Raldino, as he is called?”

“I have known him these two years,” replied Di Salvo; “he was my mother’s confessor.

“Have you ever heard by chance or in any other way, any thing of his most extraordinary life?” said the Stranger.

“Never,” replied Di Salvo.

And at that instant the story which Bardo had commenced at the ruins of Paluzzi, rushed upon his memory.

The Stranger then said—

“Did you ever hear of a confession made in the church of the Santa Maria del Pianto? Never heard that he had a wife, a brother, a child?”

“I have heard of the confession at the church you

speak of, but did not know it related to Raldino," said Rosano, "but I know nothing of the latter part of your question."

"What! never heard that he was guilty of murder and would have imbrued his guilty hands again in the blood of innocence, within the last two months, but the holy saints interceded, and saved the unhappy victim from his vile murderous hands!"

"Never! Never!" said the now dreadfully terrified Di Salvo: for the idea that it was his beloved Amanda that the Stranger alluded to, instantly rushed across his mind; but he was forbade to ask any questions.

"Listen to me, then," continued the monk, with great solemnity, and lifting up his hand slowly, to impose implicit silence on Di Salvo: "To-morrow night when you will again be summoned before the court, in that dread chamber of Torture, be calm, be firm, be collected, and if you are asked any questions relative to the father Raldino, say that for fifteen years he lived as a Dominican friar in the convent of Spirito Santo at Naples. If they should ask you who he is, or what is his real name, reply, Vincenzo, Count di Baretti. And again, if asked the motive of his disguise, refer them to the confessional of the Black Crucifix, at the Santa Maria del Pianto; and I also charge you, on expectation of seeing me again, that you bid them summon one father Anselmo Valerone, the grand penitentiary of that society, and compel him to divulge the confession made before him, in the church of *Der Pianto*, April 29th 1799, by a figure habited in the garb of a white friar, and which said confession so affected him, that he was

compelled to leave the church, and has never rightly recovered from the effect it had upon him. I shall be present, (though perhaps not visible,) as a dreadful witness."

Di Salvo now ventured to say—

"If you know these things to be true, and love justice, why do not you summon the father Anselmo? How am I to give credit to the veracity of what you have now asserted? If you wish me to obey the injunctions you have now imposed, first let me ask who are you?"

"You shall know me hereafter, and ere long, emphatically pronounced the Stranger.

And as he said these words, he drew a dagger from his garment!

"Mark the spots on this poinard," said he: "this blood would have saved yours! Here is truth. To-morrow night you shall meet me in the chamber of torture and of death! till which time reflect on what I have said. Take this warning, be firm, be resolute. Obey the injunctions I have imposed, and you shall either see or hear me again. Farewell."

And in a moment the figure disappeared, and Di Salvo was lost in the profundity of what he had seen and heard, till the centinel appeared with his scanty meal of dark bread, and a little water. Di Salvo now anxiously interrogated his guard, and begged he would tell him the name and condition of the stranger who had so recently left him: but to his great astonishment the man denied having seen any person pass through the door! and solemnly declared that he had never left his post,

nor was it possible for any one either to go in or out of that chamber without the guard seeing him. They then separated without coming to any explanation of the mysterious visitor. As Di Salvo could obtain no information from his guard, he concluded it would be the wisest plan not to say more to him on the subject than what had already passed.

But the man as he left the room, promised to keep a strict watch, to mark if any one entered the room in future.

Rosario now stretched himself again on his straw bed to ruminate on the awful words of the mysterious monk, and to prepare his mind, and fortify his feeling to encounter the next dread summons, which the stranger had said would be that night.

After taking a little of the brandied water which the centinel had brought him, he laid himself down, and fell into a profound and quiet sleep. We will leave him to take his rest, while we enquire after the unhappy lady Celestina Montaldo.

## CHAPTER XX.

Still, o'er yon tall cascade the waters roar,  
Still on yon ivied roof the redbreast sings,  
Still o'er yon stream the swallow loves to soar,  
And in its glassy waves to wet his wings.

All is the same—save in this wretched heart,  
Which once was free from every grief and care,  
But now a prey to agonizing smart,  
No ray of joy shall ever enter there.

When the Abbess of Santa della Catarina entered the gloomy cell in one of the subterraneous passages, where she had ordered the fair Celestina to be confined, her terror and agitation prevented her for some moments entering upon the business which had brought her there. At length recovering a little from her embarrassment, she endeavoured to persuade her helpless victim by every art and cunning, to consent to the wishes of her father, without any further opposition. She pictured the happiness attendant on a retired and secluded life, when compared with the snares she might fall into, or the trials she might have to encounter in a busy world. But all her arguments proved unavailing, and unconvincing to Celestina, who had fondly realized in imagination, scenes, and hours of future happiness, and she



most solemnly assured the Abbess that no argument should ever induce—no power force—or torture compel her to accept the veil; that she would most solemnly and daringly protest against it to the last moment of her existence.

The Abbess rising from her seat, cast a vindictive glance on her helpless victim, and foaming with rage and resentment at the disappointment and opposition she met with to her wishes, left the cell abruptly, bidding Celestina prepare to meet the fate that awaited her.

For some time after the Abbess had left the cell, Celestina remained almost motionless with the terror her last looks and words had overpowered her with. At length recovering a little from her fright, she endeavoured to calm her agitated feelings, and resolved to meet with fortitude the events and trials that awaited her. Tears at length came to her relief: memory also brought back numerous instances of affection shewn her by her acquaintance, and of hours of happiness spent in the loved society of Lorn Durazzo. She now even dared to hope that he might be able to effect her escape from the impending misery that threatened her, and she sat listening in anxious suspense for any noise of approaching footsteps, that might come near her cell. Being however, surrounded by enemies on every side, she had little chance of escape, for the Abbot Augustin had his emissaries in every quarter; who, by being well paid for their vigilance and attention to his wishes, were ever ready to obey his orders and execute his commands. Himself and his agents were now day and

night upon the watch to accomplish his insatiable and premeditated revenge upon the family of Montaldo.

Jerome, a creature of the Abbot's, who artfully concealed his villainies and iniquities under the monkish garb, on taking his ramble round the convent walls to see if all was safe, observed two strange pilgrims, that had been admitted to the abbey, descending from the convent garden by a trap door, which led to the cemetery. He immediately hastened to the chamber of father Augustine, and communicating to him what he had just seen, the thought flashed instantly across her minds that it must be Lorio Durazzo, who accompanied by a trusty friend, had gained admission into the convent for the purpose of reconnoitering, and intended, they had no doubt, to effect if possible, the escape of the lady Celestina.

They now agreed, as the evening approached, to take their appointed stations, and watch for their second coming, for if that was the object of their visit, the Abbot was resolved to be prepared to deliver them into the hands of the Inquisition. But the father Augustine was now hastily summoned to attend the lady Abbess in her private apartment, who stood in need of and requested his counsel. When the Abbess visited the cell of Celestina in the subterraneous caverns of the convent, she was accompanied by one of the sisterhood. As the Nun stood waiting for her superior, she accidentally cast her eyes on a shining blade which lay on the rough floor of the dungeon. She picked it up, and concealed it in the folds of her dress, until they left the cell, and again reached the Abbess's apartment. The Sister now drew

it from her girdle, when it proved to be quite a new dagger. Mora, (which was the name of the nun, presented it to the Abbess, and telling her how she came by it, the idea instantly flashed across their minds, and induced them to suppose that she meditated suicide if they proceeded to extremities with her.

They were for some time lost in conjecturing how she could have become possessed of it, as its brightness proclaimed it to have been but a recent inmate of that damp chamber. The Abbot was therefore hastily summoned to her apartment, that he might give her his opinion and counsel on the subject. After a long consultation they could come to no conclusive evidence or conjecture, how she came by the fatal instrument in her chamber. At length the Abbot seized this opportunity of requesting the Abbess would permit him to have an audience with the Novice, and he would try to gain by confession, if she really had premeditated self-destruction. But none of her associates could gain him access to this fatal den, the person of the lady Abbess; who, not liking either his countenance or manner at their interview, and being alarmed at the resolve upon seeing her, she ordered all the keys of the convent doors which led to Celestine's cell, to be instantly brought to her.

The Abbot did not even hint the slightest word to the Abbess of the discovery that had been made of the supposed pilfering, for he had not the slightest doubt in his own mind but they were in disguise, and bent on effecting the deliverance of the captive Celestine: therefore his whole thoughts were now employed upon frustrating their designs. For this purpose he had request-

ted permission to visit her in her cell, and there he intended to have awaited the arrival of her two champions. Not succeeding in this part of his scheme, he summoned father Jerome, and held consultation with him, relative to the different passages that led to the caverns beneath the convent, and from his information he felt his opinion confirmed, that the subterraneous passage from under the garden wall, would conduct him to Celestina's cell. With this conviction on his mind, he prepared a dark lantern and bunch of false keys, and as soon as the evening approached, accompanied by Jerome, they ventured forth.

On entering the gardens, they concealed themselves for a short time, to watch if any one approached the entrance to the passage, when not meeting with any interruption, they hastened to descend by the door, where, as Augustine rightly judged, the pilgrims had been in search of Celestina.

The rubbish was in many places removed, and several of the doors forced open, and left partly a-jar, and all seemed ready for a second visit. The rays of their lantern could scarcely penetrate the thick damp gloom that surrounded them; and they began to fear that their search would prove fruitless for the want of torches, or a stronger light than the one they had brought with them.

They were, without knowing it, very near the chamber where Celestina was confined. She had heard approaching footsteps and the murmuring of voices for some time, and she sat in the most anxious state of ter-

ror and suspense, either expecting to see her enemies or her deliverers enter her apartment.

The Abbot now entered a very narrow part of the passage, Jerome staying behind to keep watch; and as he passed hastily along, his foot stumbling against part of the rubbish, he fell against one of the parapets in the wall, which immediately unfastening, gave way with him; he pressed it downwards, and on looking into the chamber, he perceived his helpless victim sinking to the earth with fear. Celestina was anxiously, yet tremblingly looking for Lorio, and deemed the figure she now saw enter, to be some fearful apparition; but Augustine's cold and rugged grasp soon recalled her fleeting senses, and awakened her to life again; while he, drawing from beneath his robe, a blackened phial, told her she must speedily swallow the contents, if she would save her Lorio from the jaws of the Inquisition. Her resolution wavered; the Abbot imposed speed; at length she seized the poisonous drug, and had just conveyed it to her lips, when a distant footstep and voices sounded along the vaulted passage. It approached—she dashed the phial from her lips—it was Lorio coming to her rescue. She flew towards the opening, urged him to fly with all speed, but he, who was resolved to effect her escape or die in the attempt, rushed down, followed by Jerome, whom he had encountered, concealed in the passage.

A desperate struggle now ensued, but Lorio, after a vain and unsuccessful attempt to cope with Augustine and the athletic Jerome, was completely overpowered, and they dragged him through the little pannel

door which closed again amidst the agonizing shrieks of Celestina, and the report of fire arms, the sounds of which, reverberating along the hollow vaults, were lost in echo.

While this cruel and revengeful conduct was transacting in the chambers beneath the walls of the convent, how very different were the scenes that had been prepared above. The darkened shades of evening had no sooner sunk around the earth, than the glare of innumerable lights gleamed through the window of Santa Catarina's chapel. The awful gloom and solemnity which struck the beholder on the one side, was highly contrasted by the magnificence and splendid preparation on the other.

The whole city had thronged to the chapel to catch a last glimpse of the beautiful and admired, but now devoted lady Celestina, and also to view the splendid nuptials of her sister Victoriana and the duke of Milan, which sacrifices were both expected to take place on this same evening. The crowd had now almost thronged the chapel; already had the monks arranged themselves in front of the assembled multitudes; the gilded gratings which divided the chapel, were thrown asunder and every grandeur and solemnity that thought could conceive, was displayed on the occasion. From four o'clock in the afternoon, the heavy bell had tolled its lengthened and dismal peals at certain intervals, it now sounded the hour for evening vespers.

The stately Abbess, dressed in her pontifical robes, with every malignant feature, heightend by self-importance, and conscious security of her diabolical schemes

being carried into effect; accompanied by her closely veiled daughters, had now proceeded to the stalls prepared for them. She turned her rolling dark eyes towards the altar, and wondered greatly that the holy father Augustine had not taken his chair of state; the bell had long since done tolling its last chime, still he came not. Two of the holy sisterhood had been dispatched to robe, and to meet with the greatest speed Celestina's approach. The deeply rattling organ, and swelling of the choir had now begun. As the sacrifice of Celestina was first to take place, every eye was turned towards the avenue which led from the convent to the chapel, momentarily expecting to see her enter. The hearts, not of the young only, but of the aged, were beating with every pang of sorrow, and sickness at the thought of her fate. All too were anxious to view the Duke and his intended bride, and to mark who would be the wife of her noble father at the altar, and who her unhappily sister.

All now in expectation and suspense, the lengthened pause of the organ, and the voices of the chaunter had ceased, and all were standing around, when a quickened, exultant, and hurried step now opened through the aisle, which attracted every attention. The lady Abbess left the stall to which, and came forward with every mark of triumph, and led in her court mistress, to require the execution of her command. She was met by the Countess, and Madame de Mervill, who with them, and Countess de la Roche, entered the chapel, and standing forward for a moment, were heard to exclaim—*Adieu, my poor sister, adieu, my dear daughter!*—

“My dear lady, my dear my poor mistress Celestina!



give her this instant to my arms: this night shall see her Lorio Durazzo's bride.'

He sank quite exhausted upon a chair near the altar. Every eye was now turned alternately upon Montaldo, and then towards the avenue in expectation of seeing Celestina enter the chapel. Bustle and confusion now appeared every where. The rumour ran through the crowd like lightening, that the lady Victoriana had eloped that day with the empty coxcomb Carantani, whose adulations she had long countenanced, and that the Duke of Milan was now in pursuit of his rival.

Augustine had not yet made his appearance, which had greatly astonished every one, especially the lady Abbess. But what struck the whole assembly more than all, was the distressing and heart-rending scene which now took place. In a moment all was hushed at the sad and petrifying sight of the fair Celestina, whose beauteous form had still survived the terrifying shocks that had destroyed her angelic mind, and who now rushed into the chapel. She flitted towards her father like a sheeted spectre, and he, catching hold of her garments, folded her in his arms, lost in speechless agony. He remained quite unmanned, with his head resting on her shoulder, till he was roused from his trance of grief by the entrance of the duke of Milan, who led into the chapel the abbot Augustine, loaded with chains and strongly guarded; while his four servants followed, supporting the dying Lorio Durazzo.

When the flight of Victoriana was discovered, the Duke summoned his servants with the intention of pursuing the fugitives, and in searching for them had pas-

sed by the wall of the convent. One of his servants perceiving the rope ladder, pointed it out to his master. The Duke instantly mounted it, followed by his servants: they traversed the garden, and coming to the trap-door, descended into the subterraneous passage where Lorio and his friend had not long gone before them. They soon perceived the distant lights glimmering along the avenues, and were urged onward at first by the sound of a man's voice, as in the greatest distress. The Duke was led by traces of blood to the next trap door, which being half closed, struck him as the foreboder of evil. They now raised it up, the Duke instantly descended, closely followed by his servants, one of them carrying a torch which they found lighted, and stuck in a niche in the passage, very near the trap door. A few paces from the bottom of the stairs, lay extended and weltering in his blood, Lorio Durazzo: and not far from him, the vile agent of the abbot Augustine, (father Jerome,) who was also mortally wounded.

The servants now raised the body of Lorio, and carried it up into the garden; he was quite senseless, but they thought life was not quite extinct. They laid him on the trap door, and then returned to view the dead body. He was habited in his monk's garb, and as they drew near him, he seemed to revive a little; he raised himself on one arm, gazed wildly around him, and enquired who it was that surrounded him.

The Duke told him who he was, and requested an explanation of the dreadful catastrophe which had happened, if he was able to give it.

The Monk now groaned horribly and wildly exclaimed—

“Then I must be brief, for I fear life is ebbing fast; but ere I am called to answer before that dread tribunal for the crimes I have been guilty of, let me atone for this night’s guilt by disclosing to you some of the dreadful crimes and the agent of them, in particular the horrors of this night.”

He then briefly related the villanies he had been an accomplice in with Augustine; that the Abbot had that night endeavoured to poison Celestina, had murdered Lorio, who came to rescue her from the horrid fate to which the tyranny of her father had doomed her; and that finally the plots were laid by him for the utter annihilation of Ludovico Montaldo and his whole family.

The wretched man was then just permitted to give the necessary intelligence where Augustine was to be found, when he fell back and expired with a horrid groan.

The diabolical father Augustine, the plotter of all this night’s horrid train of woe, had hoped to have escaped the vigilance of his pursuers, by concealing himself in one of the dark recesses of the cavern beneath the walls of the convent. It was his intention to take refuge within the pale of the church as soon as he had satiated his revenge; for, as we have already observed in a former chapter, the laws of their church protect even the murderer. But in vain he attempted to hide himself, for justice sooner or later will overtake its victims.

Augustine’s career of guilt was now run, and Jerome, whom Lorio had mortally wounded in trying to defend himself, in his expiring grasp had betrayed his master.

The Duke with a strong guard now went in search of him, and discovered the Abbot's hiding place, whence he was hurried to the full glare of light that blazed through the chapel, intended to celebrate other scenes, but now witnessing the expiring remnants of youthful life and beauty.

The general cry that now ran through the chapel was, who was the wretch, that under the garb of saintly piety had wrought the ruin of an entire family. The Abbot Augustine now stepping forward and throwing back his cowl, with eyes darting fury and fixed full on Montaldo, paused for a few moments to look at him, then with a horrid ghastly grin, exclaimed—

“Behold the count of Lermain.”

The words seemed to annihilate Montaldo, and he fell prostrate on the floor. Every attention was now turned towards him and his helpless daughter. But all human aid was ineffectual, and could now neither avail anything towards the recovery of Lorio Durazzo, nor the distracted, delirious Celestina, who now leaned over her lover with feeling and looks the most heart-rending and indescribable. She had been vouchsafed a few moments of returning reason to receive his last embrace, and to replace a father's blessing. The mortal life of each was now ebbing fast, and with one convulsive struggle, their departing spirits flew hand in hand to heaven.

Montaldo was conveyed speechless from the chapel, and the abbot Augustine was dismissed to a dim, half-darkened room. A violent storm, the only Abbot's storm, retired to her apartment, to be met by the stormy sea.

had herself practised towards her helpless victim, and and which had in a great measure been the cause of the horrid catastrophe.



## CHAPTER XX.

Have I not felt the sulphurous fire,  
Have I not seen the demons dire,  
Have I not heard the mingled yell,  
That sounds as fabling fathers tell,  
Long, sad, and loud, through frightened hell?

But Oh! within the shrine of death,  
Pale, ghastly, deprived of vital breath,  
I see, I see their mangled bodies start.  
The thought strikes anguish through my icy heart  
For ah, when madness meets despair,  
A wounded spirit who can bear?

Di Salvo rested long and undisturbed, and would have felt rested and refreshed from his slumbers, but he was suddenly awakened by the terrors of a frightful dream which came over him. He started from his straw pallet, expecting to see the visions realized. Finding it was but a dream which had caused his agitation and terror, he endeavoured to regain that composure of mind he stood so much in need of. As night was fast approaching, the sentinel had, he perceived, been and left his scanty allowance of meat while he slept. He

now tried to take a little of the unpalatable fare, merely to supply the wants of his nature. He then paced his dungeon until the hour approached which was to summon him again before the tribunal of horrors; and endeavored to collect his thoughts, and to re-resh his memory with the commands and injunctions the Stranger had imposed upon him.

At the appointed hour the guards entered his chamber, his eyes were veiled, and the mantle thrown over him: they then led him to the same cavern or chamber of torture as before. The bell sounded heavily and he could hear the sound of many foot-steps enter, and as he supposed them to be the Inquisitors, assembling to take their places. The bell now ceased, when after a short pause Di Salvo was led forward, and summoned to answer to what he knew of the monk Raldino.

Di Salvo was silent. The Advocate then stepping up to Di Salvo, laid his hand on his arm, and in a loud and awful voice demanded—

“Why do you not answer the question? do you not know that resistance is death?”

“I have no answer to make, I know no crime in him,” replied Di Salvo.

“Why do you not instantly summon the father Anselmo di Valerono?” said the hollow voice of the midnight visitor; “remember my words.”

“Arrest that person immediately,” exclaimed Di Salvo, “it is the voice of my informer; it spoke low and seemed close by me. Uncover my eyes, let me see and detect him.”

It was, however, unheard by the whole court, who

now declared it to be, either an act of cunning, or of frenzy in the prisoner. The grand inquisition now ordered the notories to strictly, and correctly mark down every sentence that Di Salvo should utter; he then solemnly demanded of him, what information he had received from the strange voice.

Di Salvo then stated the order of the summons which the mysterious stranger had commanded him the night before to make to the court, and which said voice had now repeated, close to him; he then protested that he had no charge to lay against the father Anselmo, or any other person.

The attention of the whole court was now for a considerable length of time, occupied in endeavouring to discover the figure of the mysterious stranger, and Di Salvo was ordered to be unveiled, that he might if possible, identify him.

Di Salvo now looked earnestly round the room, when at length he fixed his eyes upon one that resembled him in his figure, and pointing to him, he called upon the Inquisition to order him to be uncovered.

While the officers were doing so, he distinctly heard the voice of the monk, saying, "Who calls, who asked for me?" but he could not say from whence the voice proceeded.

The person which Di Salvo had pointed to was led forward, and when the cowl of the monk he had fixed upon was lifted up, he saw instantly it was not the countenance of the stranger who had visited him in his dungeon, though he recognized a vag seen the face somewhere.



This led to a long investigation of the nocturnal visitor, to the cell of Di Salvo; the court immediately gave orders for all the chambers to attend, which they did, when after a strict examination they every one attested that they had not entered a single individual to pass near Di Salvo's chamber; they were dismissed, with strict orders to keep a vigilant watch; and Di Salvo was ordered back to his dungeon, to await the decision of the court respecting Raddino, and father Anselmo.

On the third day a grand assembly of the tribunal took place. The notaries read over deliberately the charges against Di Salvo, and the answers he had given to the questions put to him; they then held a long consultation, and made their different comments, after which the assembly broke up.

Very shortly after this event, Raddino, and father Anselmo were arrested, in consequence of citations from the Holy Office. The former was on his way to Rome, for the express purpose of endeavouring to effect the liberation of Di Salvo. He stood in no danger independently of his own measures, and never entered the mind of Raddino; he, therefore, was not tarry on his journey, taking any opportunities of anything that could materially assist him, until one called on stopped at the same inn, and was arrested. Well pleased the order was instantly carried upon.

The court immediately afterwards was again, when surrounded by the nobles, that in the same speeches, as it was usual for them to do, was summarily recovered to proceed on his journey.

Not so the father Anselmo, he attended the guards without the least opposition, or signs of emotion, merely asking if he might be informed, at whose instigation it was, that they had issued the order of arrest against him.

On the fourth night after their arrival at Rome, the court assembled in the grand state chamber of the Inquisition. An unusual degree of solemnity was displayed, and for the first time, Raldino and the father Anselmo were confronted in the court of justice, before the tribunal of the Most holy order of the Inquisition.

The grand Vicar now issued an order for the immediate attendance of Rosano di Salvo of Naples. Raldino started at the sight of him, as the officers led him into the court uncovered, and his arms bared to the elbows, and cast upon him a most terrific glance. When he was called upon to identify the person of Raldino, he did so without the least seeming emotion, and being asked how he became acquainted with the father Raldino, he replied, that he had been for more than two years confessor to the Marchioness di Salvo, his mother.

The grand Vicar now called upon the notary Officers to prepare to minute down with the greatest exactness what they should hear; the father Anselmo, the grand penitentiary at Santa Maria del Pianto, was then called upon to reveal the confession made before him on the eve of San Angelo. The deposition was as follows:

“It was on the eve of Santa dell Angelo, in the year 1750, that I was greatly alarmed by the convulsive sighs and awful groans of a person habited in the garb of a white friar, and who entered the church during the

service, and took his seat in the box on the left of the confessional where I was sitting, engaged in the duties of my office. When the service was ended, he applied for consolation. I endeavoured to hold out hopes of pardon and mercy to the penitent, whose heart seemed bursting with the secret recollection of the crimes and deeds of guilt with which it was burdened. Many times did the penitent endeavour to ease his mind by making confession, and as often did the agitation of his feelings prevent him. At length by my entreaties he succeeded so far as to calm his feelings sufficiently to make that disclosure of his guilt, the confession of which, and the recollection also, now petrify me with the same horror and agitation, holy fathers, as it will do you when you shall have heard it.

He was, as I have before observed, in the habit of a white friar, and his form and figure exactly resembled that of the father Raldino who now stands before me, but I cannot, I dare not swear to him. I did not then see his face, but his voice I shall never forget, nor the confession he then made to me."

Here the grand Penitentiary was so much agitated as to be incapable of proceeding. A long pause now ensued, during which, Raldino regarded him with a deep sorrow, and then looked at Di Salvo also, who was steadily regarding him. At length the father Anselmo continued:

"Holy Father, the penitent being a little composed, spoke thus:

"Most holy Father, I have been throughout the slave of the most atrocious and diabolical passions; to me the

authors of excesses truly horrible and direful. I had once a brother—that brother, alas! had a wife. She was beautiful and virtuous; I loved her—and I despaired; my despair led me to commit a dreadful deed! My brother died.’

Here,” said the father Anselmo, “I became most awfully affected. My limbs trembled as I listened, and my lips became sealed. The penitent also was dreadfully agitated, and his feelings were quite convulsed at the recollections of his guilt. At length the penitent proceeded:

‘My brother died at a distance from home: died! did I say, father? I was his murderer!’

The words sunk like death into the very recesses of my heart,” said the father Anselmo, “and I was silent, waiting for the penitent to recover from the trembling fit into which the last sentence he had confessed had thrown him; recovering his speech sufficiently to proceed, he thus continued:—

‘I so conducted the affair of my brother’s death, that his widow never suspected I was the cause of it. Grief, for the loss of her husband she so tenderly loved, pressed deeply upon her tender spirits, and she for a time seemed to lose her reason.

After the usual time of mourning was expired, I became a frequent and apparently welcome visitor, until one day a favourable opportunity presented itself, I made proposals of marriage to her, and was indignantly rejected; still I continued my visits, in hopes of winning her regard, but she shunned my society, and I was forbidden to visit the house.

Finding I could not conquer the passion with which she had inspired me, and that she would not yield or listen to my earnest protestations of love, I resolved to possess (if possible) by force, what I could not obtain by persuasion or entreaty. I then caused her to be removed from her house one evening to a considerable distance, where I had her closely confined for some time.

At length, under the terror of my threats, she consented to our union. But alas! happiness and conscience were flown for ever. She despised me and detested my society, and sought that happiness elsewhere, she had resolved upon never seeking at home.

At a splendid rout which was given by a neighbouring count we attended, and to mortify her too apparent contempt of me, I selected the charming signora Claretta Guera, in whose company I passed the whole night. Jealousy only made her retort upon me more disdainfully and poignantly. I soon pitched upon a rival who I fancied loved my wife, and that she returned his affection. Indeed I had every reason to suspect after that their affection was mutual, and that she spoke of him with delight, only to lighten up the flame of madness more strongly in my already infuriated mind.

One fatal evening I approached the apartment where they sat; I listened attentively and heard his voice as if supplicating. I retreated from the door and going round to the back part of the house, I ascended to the lattice, and overlooking the apartment I saw the traitor who was on his knees before her. Whether they saw me or suspected something I know not, but she instantly rose from her chair. Without hesitation or reflection I seized

my stiletto, rushed into the room, and aimed a blow at the villain's heart. He, however, warded off the blow, and escaped into the garden, while her bosom received the fatal poinard!"

Here the father Anselmo's voice faltered.

"Think, holy fathers," said he, "what were my feelings at this part of his confession. I was the lover of that lady, and she was virtuous as lovely."

"Was she innocent?" loudly exclaimed the father Raldino, and his loud agitated manner interrupted the business of the whole court.

"That greatly resembles the voice of the penitent," said father Anselmo, "it is—it must be him. But to proceed:—

On the discovery of the murderer I quitted the confessional, quite overcome by what I had just heard, my senses left me and I fell to the ground ere I could reach my chamber. The bruises I had received on my head stunned me so violently that it was some length of time before I could recover them sufficiently to enquire for the penitent. Every search was made for him, but he had escaped, nor can I now assert that he, Raldino, is the same, although the voice strikes me most forcibly as being the same."

"Can you recollect the Count di Barretto in the person of Raldino?" asked the grand Inquisitor.

"I know full well," replied Anselmo, "that the penitent is the same with the Count, but that Raldino is he I cannot affirm."

"But I dare affirm it, said another voice,"

And Di Salvo now beheld the mysterious Stranger

advancing; his cowl was thrown back, and an air of menace overspreading his features. Raldino looked at him and became violently agitated. The Stranger advancing towards him, demanded if he knew him.

"Know thee!" feebly uttered Raldino.

"Dost thou know this dagger!" said the Stranger. Behold thy brother's blood on it! Shall I declare myself?"

Raldino's courage now quite forsook him, and he sank senseless at the feet of his accuser.

Di Salvo now stepped forward, and addressing the grand Inquisitor said—

"This is the mysterious person who visited me in my dungeon; the dagger is the same he then displayed to me, when he informed me that the father Raldino was a murderer. It was he who bid me summon the father Anselmo and the father Raldino."

The attention of the whole court was now directed towards the two Monks, and Di Salvo, as he stood with his eyes steadfastly fixed upon them, became anxious for the recovery of Raldino. But the sight of his accuser and the awful manner in which he had addressed him, so alarmed and overpowered his guilty soul, that it was some hour before he came to himself, or could recollect the events that had that night transpired. On finding he did not recover from the swoon into which he had fallen, the grand Vicar ordered Raldino to be conveyed to his cell, and the court orders were issued for again assembling on the following night. They then broke up, and Di Salvo was held back to his dungeon again, to reflect on the mysterious events and awful dis-



closures that had been revealed that night; and hope whispered to him that these discoveries might ultimately effect his release from that horrid confinement.

When Raldino began to revive a little from the fit he had fallen into, he seemed quite unconscious of what had happened, or where he was. The Guards did not leave him, but endeavoured to persuade him to take a cordial that had been sent by one of the Inquisitors for him. Shortly after he had taken it he fell asleep, but did not seem to rest calmly; his slumber was disturbed by frightful dreams, and at times he was much agitated and rored during his sleep. When he awoke, he started from his bed, gazed wildly around him, talked incoherently, and paced his room to and fro with disordered and uneven steps. At length becoming in some degree more composed, he looked at his guards very earnestly for a few moments, and then asked a few broken questions. One of them answered him in the best way he could, and advised him to calm his agitation and endeavour to collect his scattered thoughts, and prepare for the approaching hour, when he would again be summoned to meet his enemies in the dread chamber, and before the tribunal of the most holy Inquisition. His countenance underwent many changes at what the officer said; but struggling with his contending feelings, he seemed determined to try to meet the court and his accusers with firmness.

The guards then left the cell, telling him at the appointed hour they should attend him to the court chamber.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

The feverish glow of his brow was gone,  
And his heart sank so still that it felt like stone,  
As he looked on the face and beheld its hue,  
So deeply changed from what he knew.

After the guards had left Raldino he fell into a deep train of thought, and reflection on past events. The figure of the stranger presented itself to his view, but how altered, how changed that countenance from when he first knew it. But although the features were so changed, the voice was the same, and the words which he had the last night pronounced, still vibrated in his ear, and chilled through the inmost recesses of his heart. That he had been a traitor to friendship, he had long proved, but Raldino believed him dead, reports had been spread through Naples of his having been lost in a storm at sea, and the confessor lulled himself into peaceful security that his greatest enemy was removed, and he had nothing to dread from him. No wonder then that his feelings were so overpowered, and his senses appalled at the sight of this dread accuser appearing before him. At first he thought it was his apparition, but when the reality of his existence was

proved by his approaching him to ask the question, "should he declare himself," his heart died within him, and he sunk at the feet of this dread foe.

As the hour was fast approaching, when he was again to appear before the tribunal of the Inquisition, with all the horrors attendant on having to encounter the menaces, and awful disclosures of guilt this dread enemy had it in his power to unfold. Raldino endeavoured to rouse himself, and tried to fortify his mind, to dissipate the terrors that had taken such hold of him, and to prepare himself for the conflict. He started from his seat and paced his room, exclaiming,

"I must, for my child's sake, for the accomplishment of the purpose for which I set out to this place, I must endeavour to meet this dread enemy with firmness."

Having formed this resolution, he became calm, steady, and collected in his manner. He partook of the food which was brought him, enquiring of the sentinel the hour, and again sat down to await the summons to attend in the Hall of Justice.

As the hour of midnight approached, which is the time this dread assembly always meet to hold their court, the great bell sounded its lengthened peal, and the different avenues to the hall of justice were filled with the Inquisitions and officers, each moving slowly towards their appointed stations. The clock tolled the hour, the passing bell ceased, and the grand Inquisition and judges took their seats.

The summons's were then issued by the Vicar, for the immediate attendance of the father Anselmo, the father Raldino, and Rosano di Salvo; Raldino was the

last who entered, and although every eye was directed towards—and indeed, intently fixed upon him, yet he entered the court between two of the officers, with a firm, steady, and undaunted step. He glanced his dark rolling eyes around the hall, as if in search of some particular object, and then resting them on the assembly, seemed waiting for a trial, or examination to commence.

The grand Inquisitor now ordered the names to be called out, and the notary officers to prepare to minute down all the particulars of the different examinations and answers to the questions. He then called upon the father Raddino to step forward, to take the oath, and make his defence to the accusations alleged against him the night before.

After a short pause and some little hesitation, Raddino said—

“Holy father, the accuser has spoken falsely, he is my most intimate friend! it is his perfidy which now affects me; it is the sight of him whom I have long since believed dead which now so greatly agitates and has affected me. Alas that living he should be so changed, so altered. His name is Pietro di Bracon. We first lived together in the convent of San Angelo, and since that in the Spirito Santo, of which he is a brother. The cancer of his enmity I can readily and will most willingly explain.

I had promised to assist his pretension through the medium of a friend, with what little interest I possessed, and had every reason to believe after I had given my word, that I should be able to more than fulfil my pro-

mise. Having raised his expectations, his sanguinary disposition and thoughts consequently became elevated to the highest pitch, when the person on whom I had depended to assist me in procuring this high situation for Di Bracio, deceived me. Not being able to fulfil my promise, then, with regard to his preferment, he was disappointed; his hopes and expectations were blighted, and he became my most inveterate enemy. And to this cause and this alone, I am to attribute this unjust accusation."

Raldino was silent, yet a strong degree of anxiety pervaded his countenance. The Inquisitors looked at each other. His accuser also remained silent, but a malicious smile stole over his features, and announced the triumph he felt.

After a pause, the Vicar said—

"You must also declare the services which marked the reward you promised."

"Those services were inestimable to me," replied Raldino after a momentary hesitation, "and though they cost Petro little, they were to me great sources of consolation and comfort. They were the consolations (I thought) of sympathy and friendship, which he administered and which I thought would never be repaid."

"Of sympathy and friendship?" said the grand Vicar. "Are we, or can any one suppose and believe that a man who brings false accusations of a nature so dreadful as the one now before us, is capable of conferring the consolations either of sympathy or friendship? there is an inconsistency in this defence. You must either acknowledge that services of a less disinterested nature won

your promises of reward, or we must conclude that your accuser's charge is just. We cannot be deceived; your assertions are too trivial to give credit to for one moment."

"I have declared the truth," said Raldino, with a haughty frown.

"Impossible," said the Inquisitor, "for your assertions flatly contradict each other. It appears even from your own testimony, that the ingratitude was your's and not your accuser's: since he consoled you with acts of kindness, and for which you allow you have never made him any return. Have you any thing farther to add?"

Raldino was silent.

"This, then, is all the explanation or defence you mean to make?" asked the Vicar.

Raldino bowed his head, and still remained silent.

The Inquisitor then addressing the accuser, demanded if he had any reply to make.

"I have nothing to reply," said the stranger, with a malicious smile, "the accused has replied for me."

"Then what he has asserted with regard to your being a monk of the San Spirito convent, is true?" said the Vicar.

"Yes, holy father," said the Stranger seriously, "he can answer for me, whether I am."

The Inquisitor rose from his chair of state, and stepping forward, said in a solemn voice—

"I answer, then, that he is not a monk of the San Spirito convent at Naples."

"By that reply," said the Vicar general, "I perceive

that you think and believe the father Raldino to be guilty."

The answer was positive.

During these proceedings, Di Salvo regarded each figure with the utmost earnestness and attention. He was perplexed to interpret what had passed. The Inquisitor had asserted positively his opinion, and he was astonished that he should conduct himself towards the Stranger as if he had never known him.

The grand Vicar now spoke:

"The evidence of father Raldino is in part false. His accuser is not a monk of the Spirito Santo at Naples, but a servant of the Inquisition. Therefore, if we may judge from this part of your evidence, we must suspect the whole."

"Reverend father," rejoined Raldino, "your assertion astonishes me. Petro di Braccio a servant of the Inquisitors! you are deceived; he is a monk of the Dominican convent of San Spirito at Naples. But as you doubt my word I therefore will assert no more. But you had better enquire of Signor di Salvo: ask him whether he has not often and lately seen him at Naples, and in the habit of a monk."

"I have seen him at the ruins of Paluzzi, near Naples, and in that dress," replied Di Salvo, without waiting to be asked the question, "and in circumstances no less singular and extraordinary than those which have attended him here. But" said Di Salvo, addressing the tribunal, "I require of you to ask the father Raldino by what means he was informed that I have often seen the



Stranger at the ruins of Palazzi, and if he was interested or not in his mysterious conduct towards me there?"

To all the questions put, Raldino did not deign to reply.

"From what I can perceive," said the Vicar, "the accuser and the accused were once accomplices."

"Be it *accomplices*, then," said Raldino, bowing to the Vicar, but I affirm we were first intimate *friends*. And since it is necessary even to my own peace that I should explain more fully some circumstances attending our intimacy, I will own that Petro di Bracio was occasionally my agent, and assisted in preserving the dignity of a illustrious family at Naples—the family of the Di Salvo. And there, holy father," said Raldino, pointing to Rosano, "is the only son of that ancient and illustrious house, for whom I have attempted so much."

At this confession of Raldino, Di Salvo was almost overwhelmed, though he already many times suspected a part of the truth. He now believed he saw in the Stranger, the slayer of Amanda, the base instrument of the Marquis de Salvo's policy, and of Raldino's ambition; and the whole of his conduct seemed quite intelligible. He had now beheld his secret accuser and the vice-enemy who had been the sole cause of his Amanda's imprisonment and death. As these thoughts rushed like tempests on his soul, his patience forsook him. He rose, and, with a gasping cry, "But from what he had heard of the Stranger, he knew him to be his secret accuser, and also the enemy of Amanda Lusmette. And he said nothing in the tribunal to come into the Confessor's motives for the detection, and

afterwards to give hearing to what he himself would unfold.

The grand Vicar replied, that his appeal should be taken into consideration.

The Inquisitor then addressing Raldino said—

“The nature and disinterestedness of your friendship is now sufficiently explained, and the degree of credit which is due to your late assertions understood. Of you we ask no more. But of Petro di Bracio we demand what he has to say in support of his accusation. What are your proofs that he who calls himself father Raldino is the count di Baretto, and that he has been guilty of murder, the murder of his own brother, and his wife and child?” Answer to our charge.

“To your first question,” replied the Monk, “he has himself acknowledged to me that he was the Count di Barretto, and to the last I produce the poinard which I received with the dying confession of the assassin whom he employed.”

“Yet these are not proofs of guilt, but mere assertions,” observed the Vicar general, “and the first forbids our confidence in the second. If Raldino confessed to you that he really was the Count Di Barretto, you must have been the intimate friend he has declared you to have been, or he would never have confided to you a secret so dangerous in every respect to himself. And if you really were that friend, what credit can be given to your accusations, since you prove yourself guilty of treachery in bringing them forward at all.”

Di Salvo listened with the utmost degree of astonish-

ment, to hear such candour proceed from the mouth of an Inquisitor.

After a short pause the stranger produced a paper, saying,—

“Here is my proof; this contains the dying confession of the assassin; it is signed by a priest of Rome as well as by himself, and you will see it has been dated but a few weeks. The priest is still living and may be summoned.”

The tribunal then issued an order for the apprehension of this priest, and if possible, that he should be brought to give evidence on the following evening.

The vicar then said—

“Father Petro, I call upon you to say, why, if your proof of Raldino’s guilt is so clear, as the confession on this paper must make it, why did you think it necessary to summon father Anselmo to attest the crimes of the Count di Barretto? the dying confession is the strongest!”

“I summoned him as a means of proving that the father Raldino is the Count di Barretto, the confessor proves the Count to have been the instigation of the murder, but not that Raldino is the Count.”

“And that is more than I can engage to prove,” replied the father Anselmo, “I know it was the Count di Barretto who confessed to me, but I cannot attest that the father Raldino, who now stands before me, was the person who made that confession.”

“The observation is conscientious,” said the Vicar, interrupting the stranger, who was about to speak, “but you, Petro di Bracio, must be more explicit.

How do you know that the father Raldino is the penitent, who confessed to the father Anselmo on the eve of San Angelo?"

"Reverend father," replied the monk, "this is the point I was about to explain. I myself accompanied Raldino, on the eve of San Angelo, to the church of the Santa Maria del Pianto, at the very hour when the confession is said to have been made. He told me he was going to make confession. I could not help observing the great agitation in his behaviour, and from some words which he dropt, in the confusion of his mind, he betrayed a consciousness of extraordinary guilt. I parted with him at the church gates. He was then of an order of White Friars, and habited as the father Anselmo had described."

In a few weeks after this confession, he left his convent, but for what reason I never knew, although I often guessed at it, and came to reside at the San Spirito convent, whither I also had removed."

"This is no proof," said the Vicar general. "Other friars of the same order might do the same. We must not judge from probabilities themselves, they are strongly against the evidence of a man who would betray another by means of words dropped in the unguarded moments of powerful emotion."

These are noble sentiments, thought Di Salvo, while he gazed on this just judge, and whose candour, had it been exerted in *his* cause, could not have excited more powerful sensations of esteem and admiration.

The inferior Inquisitor then asked—

"Has the accuser anything further to urge that the

father Raldino is the penitent who made confession to the penitentiary Anselmo?"

"I have," replied the Monk, with great asperity. "When I left Raldino in the church, I waited without the walls for his return, according to appointment. But he came much sooner than I expected, and in the greatest disorder. He instantly rushed by me, nor could the sound of my voice arrest his progress. The great confusion was soon to prevail both in the church and the convent; and I would have entered for the purpose of settling the cause, but the doors were immediately closed, and I afterwards learnt that the monks were then searching for the penitent. The circumstances of the father Anselmo having left the confessional chair with him, had produced a report that the cause was occasioned by what I had been divulged from the grate. This report excited general attention, with me it did still more, for I thought I knew the penitent. On the following day, I questioned Raldino as to his sudden departure from the church. His answers were dark and emphatic, and he extorted from me a promise that I would never disclose his visit of the preceding evening to the church or convent of Plauto. I then instantly discovered the penitent who had left the church in such haste, was indeed Raldino, nor did he deny it, when I told him he was the penitent who had frightened the father Anselmo out of the church."

"Did he make any confession to you then?" asked the Vicar.

"No," replied he, "nor had I at that time any suspicion of the nature of his crimes. I saw only the assassin

begin his confession, and the conclusion clearly explained all, and it also plainly proved his motive for endeavouring ever after to attach me to his interest, and of his extorting from me an oath never to reveal his visit to the Santa della Pianto. Since that period I have quitted the convent San Spirito, and entered into the service of the most holy Inquisition. Nor would the present accusation have been brought forward now but for the death and confession of the assassin.

"You have now," said the Vicar, "confessed yourself a member of the Santa Spirito Convent, at Naples, and are an intimate of the father Raldino's, one who for many years he has endeavoured to attach to his interest, and yet not an hour has passed since you denied all this."

"I denied that I am a monk of Naples," said the stranger, "and I appeal to the Inquisitor for the truth of what I asserted. He has said I am now a servant of the most holy Inquisition."

Great surprise was now manifested throughout the court, and the Inquisitor rose and replied to the Vicar's demand for an explanation.

"Petro di Bracio has spoken the truth. It is not many weeks since he entered the holy office. A certificate from his convent at Naples bears testimony to the truth of what I advance, and procured him admission here."

"I should be glad to know your reasons for not having made known your knowledge of this person before," said the Vicar-general.

"Holy father, I had reasons you will recollect, that

were occasioned by the accused being present I comprehend you, but I do not approve of your countenancing the subterfuge of this stranger relative to his identity ; I will explain all this to you in private," was the reply.

The Vicar then observed—

"It appears that this Pietro was formerly the friend and confidant of the father Raldino, whom he now accuses ; the accusation is, therefore, evidently malicious, whether it be also false, remains to be decided. But why was not the accusation brought forward sooner?"

The Monk's visage brightened as he replied—

"As soon as I became acquainted with the crimes, I immediately prepared to bring the perpetrator of them to justice. A short period only has elapsed since the assassin gave his confession. During the interval I discovered in these prisons, Signor di Salvo, and I instantly comprehended by whose vile means he was betrayed and confined here. I knew them both sufficiently to feel convinced which was the injured or the innocent party, therefore I had a double motive for causing the father Raldino to be summoned. I wished equally to deliver the innocent from oppression and confinement, and to bring the guilty to meet the just punishment due to his crimes. Why, then, I became the enemy of him who was once my friend, is clearly proved—it was a sense of justice, not of malice or revenge."

The Vicar general smiled but asked no more questions. He then gave orders for Raldino to be reconducted into close confinement till full evidence should be obtained of his guilt.



The Officers led Raldino from the hall of justice, and as he withdrew he bowed respectfully to the tribunal, and he no longer betrayed any symptom of conscious guilt. His countenance was firm and even tranquil, and his whole deportment dignified. All eyes were fixed on him with looks expressive of the greatest wonder, and Di Salvo, as he doubted his innocence, felt equally astonished at the placid air and manner he assumed.

The court having issued strict orders for the Roman priest to be summoned to appear if possible on the following night, the assembly broke up, and Di Salvo was led back to his cell.



## CHAPTER XXIV.

The hour of retribution will come,  
And thy heart shall bleed in life's last hour,  
With grief and horror at thy deeds.

The meeting of the Inquisition according to adjournment, assumed on the following night, and for the last time, a more awful solemnity than before. Every circumstance was now arranged according to the full ceremonies of the place. The members of the tribunal were more numerous than formerly at the examinations. The

habits of the judges were more flowing than on ordinary occasions, and their black turbans much larger than usual, seemed to give an air of sterner ferocity to their naturally dark features. Every attendant was clad in black; the hall also was hung round with drapery of the same sable hue, and the light, which was diffused through the apartment from lamps dimly lighted, and hung high in the vaulted roof, gave a gloomy solemnity to the meeting, which was quite horrific. All the different officials took their stations, their arms bared to the elbows, and each holding a short-lighted taper and a crucifix, which made their appearance quite terrific. The prisoners were brought into court soon after the different judges and principal inquisitors had taken their seats. Di Salvo was situated so that he could behold the whole tribunal, and plainly distinguish whatever was passing in the hall. The countenances of every member of the court was now fully displayed to him by the officers who held the torches, and who were arranged before the platform on which the three principal Inquisitors were elevated. The inferior members were ranged on either side. But Di Salvo could not long bear to look at their dark, fierce, and malignant features, rendered more terrific by the red glare of light which the torches threw upon their expressive features.

On taking his seat and looking round before the bar of the tribunal, he beheld Raldino, and little did he suspect that in him he beheld the father of Amanda, a criminal brought to the bar of Justice to answer to the crime of murder—the murder of a brother and of a wife

and child. Opposite to Raldino was seated the father Anselmo, the Roman priest, who was to be a principal witness against him, and the monk Petro di Bracio. Upon the latter, Di Salvo could not even look, without feeling a great degree of awe overspread his mind. The same mysterious, wild, and indescribable appearance marked his character.

The witnesses now being called over, Di Salvo found that he was placed among them. Yet as Petro was present, he did not perceive why he should be called upon, as he had but repeated his words.

When Di Salvo had in his turn answered to his name, a voice bursting forth from a distant part of the hall exclaimed—

“It is my dear, dear master.”

And on looking from whence the bustle proceeded, he perceived his faithful servant Bardo struggling with his guard. Di Salvo called to him and bid him forbear resistance, and he would endeavour to obtain permission to speak to him immediately. But it was in vain to urge patience, he broke from the guards, and was in an instant at his master's feet, when bursting into tears to relieve his overjoyed heart at seeing him again, he sobbed out—

“Oh my dear master, am I permitted to see you once again!”

Di Salvo was much affected at the sight and feelings of this faithful creature, and begged of him to be calm and not interrupt the business of the court. But the Guards forbidding him to remain near his master, rendered it totally impossible to keep him silent. He raved

and threatened, declared he could but die once, and that should be at the feet of his beloved master, for he would not be removed until the last gasp. Di Salvo tried to persuade him to submit, bid him remember his situation and his own also.

"I entreat you to be silent, and I feel assured you will give me this proof of your attachment," said Di Salvo.

"Do not use such heart-breaking words again, dear master," said Bardo, dashing the tears from his cheek.

"You will be silent, and submit then to what I require of you Bardo," said Di Salvo.

"Aye, Signor, if it is even to kneel at the feet of that devil of an Inquisitor, yonder, and offer up a petition for you."

"I shall only require of you to be silent," was the reply.

But the Officers were not willing he should stay by his master, and a loud contention arose, when the ordinary Inquisitor demanded silence, and asked the cause of the confusion.

Di Salvo now interfered and gave an explanation, at the same time requested permission for Bardo to remain near him during the time he was in court, and he would be answerable for his good conduct. At length, after much difficulty, a sort of compromise was made, and Bardo being soothed by Di Salvo into some degree of compliance, he was suffered to remain by his master.

Every preparation being ready, the trial at length began. Anselmo the penitentiary and the monk Petio di Braccio appeared as witnesses, as also the Roman priest.

He had been privately interrogated and had given clear and satisfactory evidence as to the truth of the paper produced by Petro. Other witnesses also made their appearance, who had been subpoenaed, and whom the father Raldino had no expectation of seeing. The conduct of father Raldino on entering the hall was firm and collected, and it remained unchanged when the Roman priest was brought forward; but on the appearance of another witness, his courage seemed to forsake him.

Before this evidence was, however, called forward, the depositions of the assassin were publicly read. They stated with the the greatest exactness and closest conciseness the chief facts of the deposition.

It appeared that the late count had passed over into Greece about the year 1749, a journey which his brother, the present confessor, having long expected, had meditated to take advantage of. Although a lawless passion had at first suggested to the dark mind of Raldino the atrocious act which should destroy a brother, many after circumstances had conspired to urge him to the accomplishment of it. Among these was the conduct of the late count towards him. Raldino, who, as a younger brother of his family, bore the name of the count Di Barretto, had dissipated and squandered away his small patrimony at a very early age. The late count his brother, though his fortune was very limited, had often assisted his wants, till finding his profligacy was such, and that the sums which he himself spared with difficulty from his family, were lavished without remorse by Barretto, instead of being applied with care and economy to his support, he refused further aid than was suf-

ficient for his absolute neccessities. Being thus disappointed in his supplies, and seeing his brother by prudence and economy happy, and in possession of an unencumbured estate and a beautiful and amiable wife, the rancour thus excited was cherished by innumerable circumstances and ripened by envy, that meanest and most malignant of the human passions, and he was tempted to perpetrate the deed which might transfer those blessings to himself.

Thomo, who has already been represented as a dark character, was fixed upon and employed for the purpose. He was well known to Raldino, and he did not fear to confide in this man. He had purchased a small habitation on the remote shore of the Adriatic for him, and was to allow a certain sum for him to live upon for his life. This was the dwelling to which Amanda was afterwards taken, and was near being sacrificed also. Raldino took care to let the said man Thomo know when his brother was to return from Greece. Thomo and his comrade had repeatedly watched for him, and he had crossed the Adriatic from Ragnoi to Monfredonia, and was entering the woods of the Garganus, when Thomo and the other villain overtook him. The Count was only attended by a guide of the country who was to conduct him through the forest. Concealed behind the bushes they fired, and the Count looking round to discover his enemy, prepared to defend himself, but the guide made his escape, and the firing was kept up with such good aim that the Count soon fell a victim covered with wounds. The body was buried on the spot, but for his greater security, Thomo afterwards removed it in a sack



to his own house by night, and buried it under the floor, thus displacing all proof, should his accomplices hereafter point out to justice the spot in which he had assisted to deposit the mangled remains of the unfortunate Count. Raldino contrived to circulate a report that his brother had been with the whole of the ship's crew, lost in a storm on his passage home; and as no persons but the two assassins were acquainted with the real cause of his death, the guide having fled, and the people at the only inn he stopped at being unacquainted with his real name, there was not the least circumstance to contradict the falsehood.

The report had been generally believed, and even his widow had perhaps never doubted the truth, had not Raldino, after she had been forced into a marriage with him, awakened her suspicions as to the real cause of her husband's death. But she forbore to disclose her suspicions; she had never liked Raldino, and now that she had been compelled to accept him for her husband, she utterly detested him.

During the reading of Thomo's confession and especially at the conclusion of it, the surprise and consternation of Raldino was too powerful for concealment. He had wondered that Thomo should have come to Rome to make these depositions. Besides, he had flattered himself that the wounds he had inflicted on him at the Villa had proved fatal, and that he had nothing to fear from this dread enemy. Thomo had confessed to the Roman priest that his motive for coming to Rome, was to extort many from Raldino, for he had told him when they parted, and he took a fresh guide through the fo-



rest of Garganus, that he was going to Rome, and he now perceived that this very artifice which he had practised towards his accomplice, had been the very means of bringing his crimes before the public.

The fatigue of a long journey performed chiefly on foot, in Thomo's wounded condition, occasioned the illness which was to terminate his life. Finding his end draw near, he sent for the Roman priest and unburthened his conscience by a full confession of his guilt.

As this confession implicated a living person, it was absolutely necessary to call in a proper witness to attest the dying words of the penitent; the priest immediately called in a friend, who proved to be Petro di Braccio, the former intimate of the father Raldino, and who now rejoiced at the discovery of these crimes in Raldino, as it would enable him to punish, and bring to justice a man, from whom he had received only severe disappointment.

Raldino now perceived that all his artifice, and designs, especially against Thomo, had failed.

It will be remembered that when the Confessor parted with his arch guide at the inn, he forced him to take a stiletto; this instrument was tipped with poison, and given with a double view of killing Thomo if he encountered him on his return, or of destroying the peasant himself, if he should get a scratch with it, as the confessor suspected he was known to him.

Raldino had for many years secretly carried about him such an envenomed instrument, for reasons best known only to himself.

The assassin who assisted Thomo in committing the murder, had been dead many years, and Raldino had lulled himself into security, and a hope that Thomo had died also. If then he had been shocked and horror-struck by the dying confession of Thomo, how great must have been his dismay when a fresh witness was brought forward against him, a servant who had lived with him after the death of his brother. This man identified the father Raldino, for Gieraldio Count di Barretto, and not only did he bear testimony to his person, but also to the death of the Countess, his wife. He declared himself to be one of the domestics who had assisted in conveying her to her apartment after she had received the wound from the poniard of Raldino; he also bore witness to the flight of his master, after these events, and solemnly declared that he had never publicly appeared upon his estate since that period.

An Inquisitor now asked whether any means had been taken towards prosecuting the Count.

The witness replied, that a long speech had been made for him, but without success.

Many other questions were asked as to his identity, and all the answers of the witness tended to prove, that the father Raldino, was in reality the Count Gieraldio di Barretto. And the evidence of the father Anselmo tended to prove what he had said, for he well remembered him to have been a servant of the Count's, viz. (Raldino's,) at the time he himself visited at his house.

And although perhaps it was his manner of life, that had so altered Raldino, yet Anselmo could well remember the servant, though he had forgotten his master.

Raldino, not without the strongest reasons, was greatly appalled at the appearance of his servant, whose testimony gave such clearness, and proof to the other parts of the evidence, that the tribunal pronounced sentence upon Raldino as the murderer of his brother; and as this, the first charge was quite sufficient for his condemnation to death, they did not proceed upon any other charge.

The emotion and terror betrayed by Raldino, on the appearance of his last witness, and during the delivery of the evidence, disappeared when his fate became certain; and when the dreadful sentence of the law was pronounced by the Judge, it made no visible impression on him. And from that moment, his firmness, or his hardihood never forsook him.

Di Salvo, as he witnessed his condemnation, became infinitely affected, and, as in revealing the circumstance of Petro's summons, which had eventually led to the discovery of Raldino's crimes, he had not been left a choice in his conduct, he felt at this moment, as miserable as if he had actually borne witness against the life of a fellow-being.

As Raldino was led from the Hall of Justice, passing Di Salvo, he paused, and casting upon him a most terrible look, he said—

“In me you have murdered the father of Amanda Tusinette.”

Di Salvo started with amazement. It was very evident that he did not utter these words, with any idea that Di Salvo would intercede, or have it in his power to obtain any mitigation of the sentence pronounced

upon him, but for the purpose of revenging himself for the evil which Di Salvo's evidence had contributed to produce ; and of inflicting the exquisite misery such information was calculated to give.

At first, indeed, Di Salvo judged it to be only a desperate assertion ; but, upon demanding to know her exact situation, Raldino casting upon him a smile of triumph and derision, was passing on without deigning to reply ; but Di Salvo, unable to endure such a state of uncertainty, asked permission of the tribunal to put a few questions to the prisoner : the request was granted, on condition that he asked those questions in public.

To the questions put to him, Raldino only deigned to reply, that Amanda was his daughter, and that she was now safe at the Convent Della Martino.

The joy of Di Salvo at this information, overcame every other consideration, and he returned to his cell, thankful for the intelligence that she was safe ; and Raldino was conducted to a dungeon's darkest gloom, there to await the just punishment his crimes merited.

When Di Salvo was again being taken back to his dungeon, Bardo became quite outrageous, and declared he would not again be separated from his dear master. Di Salvo petitioned the tribunal that he might go with him to his prison, but his request was denied, and he endeavoured to calm his grief, and bid him hope that they should meet again. This faithful creature fell at his master's feet and shed many tears, but he uttered no further complaints. When he arose he turned his eyes mournfully on Di Salvo, and they seemed to say, 'I

shall never see you again.' Di Salvo felt greatly appalled at the distress and piteous looks of Bardo, and although he withdrew his eyes, yet they as constantly returned to take another look at him, until the door closed upon them.

Di Salvo entreated the officer who re-conducted him to his cell, to speak to the person who kept guard over him, to shew him every allowable indulgence.

"That will be of no use," said the man, "he must meet his fate here for his late misconduct; he has been near getting one of our guards into a sad scrape already, for he so talked to him and persuaded him, that he let him have a light, and a pen and ink; but very luckily it was discovered, and taken from him, before he had done any harm."

"And what became of the good fellow?"

"Good indeed! do you call it being good to betray his truth, and neglect his duty?"

"Was he punished?"

"No," said the man, looking behind him, ("and perhaps I shall be discovered too, talking to you,) being a novice, for he has not been here long, they let him off that once, and sent him to guard some body else that was not so likely to coax him out of his duty."

"I suppose he liked Bardo's merry ways," said Di Salvo.

"Ah, no, Signor, I used to cry to him; but that was a bad mistake."

"But Bardo reproached him for his kindness, I suppose," said Di Salvo.

"He! no, he had it not in his power, and that was what surprised us all."

"But his master can reward any kindness shewn him," said Di Salvo, at the same time he slipped two or three pieces of money into his hand. The officer gave him a look, and immediately left the cell.

Di Salvo seated himself, and fell into a long train of thought;—

"When," he mentally exclaimed, "shall I be freed from this dreadful state of suspense! What will be my fate?"

His mind became strangely agitated, between emotions the most opposite in their nature. Joy prevailed his heart at the discovery that Amanda was safe, and again sorrow depressed him at the bare idea of her being related to Raldino. That her father should be a murderer—that he should be brought to an ignominious death; and when he reflected that, however unintentionally, he had assisted in bringing him to the fate his crimes merited, these ideas as they rushed across his mind, rendered his feelings almost insupportable. At one time he would endeavour to console himself with the thought, that perhaps Raldino had asserted a revengeful falsehood, and on the other hand the surmise was rejected, as the confessor had assured him of Amanda's safety, which he would not have done, had his general intent towards him been malicious. But it was possible that even that information might not be true. With an anxiety of mind so intense as almost to render him incapable of judging, he examined every minute circumstance and relative incident, and conclud-

ed that for once he would try to believe that Raldino had spoken honestly. Whether he had done so with regard to his first assertion, was a question that had raised in Di Salvo's mind a tempest of conjecture, and of indescribable horror ; for which the subject of it was too surprising to be fully credited, it was also too dreadful not to be apprehended as even a possibility. Lost in doubt and uncertainty, we must now leave him, and with the anchor of hope on which he must now seek repose, for the present ; and endeavour to calm his agitated mind, and regain his wonted composure.



## CHAPTER XXV.

Behold that lovely female form,  
Bleach'd in affliction's blighting storm ;  
Behold her ! ask why falls that tear,  
Why bends the mournful head and hands uplift in prayer ?

Perchance, while in this lower world to stray,  
Prisoners she may still be doom'd to bear ;  
And destiny forbid the happy day,  
When Hope has promised an adieu to care.

While the events were passing in the prison of the Inquisition, at Rome, Amanda, in the sanctuary of Della Mortara, remained ignorant of the arrest of Raldino, and Di Salvo's imprisonment and perilous situation. Her



mind was agitated and occupied with doubt, arising from the lengthened silence of her father. She conjectured that the Confessor was preparing to acknowledge her for his daughter, and believed that she guessed rightly the motive for his absence as well as his silence. Although he had forbidden her to expect a visit from him until he should be prepared to own her, yet he had promised to write to her, and his silence had excited terrible apprehensions and suspense, as she was in hopes of hearing from him some tidings of the situation and welfare of Di Salvo.

“If he is a prisoner, his confinement must be severe indeed,” said the afflicted Amanda, “since he cannot relieve my anxiety, even with a single line of intelligence.” “Or perhaps,” thought she, harrassed by unceasing opposition, “he has submitted to the cruel and imperative command of his haughty, proud family, and has consented to forget me. Ah ! why did I leave them the opportunity ? Why was I not firm in my first resolves ? Why did I not enforce it myself ?”

Yet while she uttered this self-reproach, the tears she shed contradicted the pride which had suggested it ; and the firm persuasion which pervaded her mind, and a strong conviction lurking in her heart, told her that Di Salvo could not, had not resigned her ; these thoughts soon dissipated her tears, but others more poignant recalled them ; the possibility that he might be ill, or the dreadful thought, perhaps he was dead. To dissipate such gloomy ideas, relieve her mind from the melancholy, which in spite of her efforts to the contrary, had taken such deep root, Amanda regularly partook of

the different employment, and various occupations of the nuns ; and was particularly careful not to indulge in any useless expressions of anxiety, nor had she once disclosed the sacred subject of her sorrows. Her endeavours were not unavailing, for though she could not assume an air of cheerfulness, yet she never appeared otherwise than tranquil ; and in the presence of the Lady Abbess always comparatively contented and happy. Her most soothing, perhaps, most melancholy hour, was, when about sun-set she could retire unnoticed to the garden of the convent, or to the orange or citron groves which formed a part of the domain. There, alone and relieved from all restraint or ceremony, she felt more at liberty, and could indulge her thoughts. She could then wander amongst the rocks and cliffs, or on the terrace, which commanded a most magnificent view of the bay : and here seated beneath the shade of the beautiful accacias, or plane tree, the surrounding scenery brought back to memory in sad, yet pleasing imagery, the many happy hours she had passed on those shores, in the society of Di Salvo, and her dear departed ; hours never, never to return.

One evening Amanda had lingered in the grove much later than usual, her mind was calmed, and her thoughts elevated by viewing the grandeur of the surrounding scene ; and the tranquility of nature had composed her thoughts, and rescued her mind from a portion of the cares that oppressed it. The pleasing calmness which had stolen over her mind elevated her thoughts, when sitting herself upon one of the crags near her, she

touched the cords of the lute, and sang the following lines, with the most expressive feeling and sweetness.—

'Tis night, and all is silent round,  
And all is hush'd to gentle peace ;  
Yet is there one still restless found,  
Who lives to think, to pray, and weep.

I think on one who loves me well,  
And weep that he's so far away ;  
How dear I love, no words can tell,  
How fervent for his safety pray.

I dare not think but all is well,  
Yet vainly chide the struggling sigh ;  
As list'ning to the wind, I tell  
My fears, and yet those fears I fly.

Ah ! what if joy could ever cheer  
This aching heart when thou removed ?  
A dessert would the world appear,  
Depriv'd of him so dearly lov'd.

Meek Resignation's holy pray'r,  
How oft hath charmed my youthful mind ;  
And I have thought I felt it here,  
And fondly dreamed I was resign'd.

But, oh! how hard experience proves,  
To give up all the stubborn will;  
Then help me Lord in sorrow's day,  
Thy will be done, I fain would say.

At the conclusion of the piece, Amanda arose from her seat and left the grove; as she proceeded towards the Convent, she perceived through the dubious light, an unusual number of figures moving in the court of the great cloister, and she could distinctly hear the murmuring of many voices.

On her nearer approach the white drapery of the Nuns made them conspicuous as they moved to and fro, but it was impossible to ascertain who were the other persons engaged in the bustle. Amanda felt rather surprised at the appearance of so much confusion, and on the assemblage dispersing, she felt curious to know the occasion of what she had observed, therefore prepared to descend to the Convent. She had left the terrace, and was about to enter a long avenue of chestnuts that extended to the Convent, and communicated with the great Court, when she heard approaching footsteps, and on turning into the walk, she perceived several persons advancing in too shady a costume. Among the voices as they drew near, she distinguished one that she recollected to have heard with delight before. It spoke again! Amanda thought she could not be deceived in the tender recollection, so sweet, so full of consolation. She proceeded with quickenings of expectation, and drew near the group, and paused to distinguish whether

among them was any figure that accorded with the voice, and could justify her hopes. The voice spoke again; it pronounced her name with the trembling of tenderness and impatience; and Amanda scarcely dared to trust her senses, when she beheld Heloisa, the Nun who had been her faithful friend, and had assisted her escape from the Convent of Santa Della Floriano.

Amanda embraced her friend and expressed her surprise and joy at finding her deliverer,—her preserver in safety, and in the quiet peaceful groves of the Santa Della Mortino. Heloisa returned all the affectionate caresses of her young friend, and while she promised to explain the reasons for her appearance there, she in her turn made many enquiries relative to Amanda's journey, and adventures after she had quitted Santa Floriano. They were now, however, obliged to postpone all further conversation for the present.

When Amanda led the Nun to her apartment for the night, she then explained her reasons for having quitted the Convent of Santa Floriano, which were quite sufficient to justify her conduct, with regard to the steps she had taken.

The unfortunate Heloisa was immediately suspected in having assisted in the escape of Amanda, from the Convent Della Floriano, and her situation became truly wretched from the cruel and vindictive treatment she received day and night from the enraged Lady Abbess, whom nothing could appease, at the loss of her praise. As soon as she could possibly accomplish it, she petitioned the Bishop of her Diocese for leave to be removed from the Convent Della Floriano, to the Convent

Della Martino. And she had permission granted, as the Holy Abbess had no proof to proceed formally against her nor to accuse her in the case of a novice. Carlo was the only person who could have given any evidence, and he was too deeply implicated in the affair himself, to do so; and we may judge from his silence on the subject, that accident, and not design, had occasioned his failure, on the evening he had promised safely to conduct Di Salvo and Amanda through the subteraneous passages of the Convent, to a place of safety.

When the Lady Abbess was informed that the Nun Heloisa had obtained a permit from the Bishop to leave the Convent, her rage knew no bounds; therefore it became absolutely necessary for the Nun to change her residence instantly, as the Abbess had not only the power, but the inclination to render her life truly miserable.

Heloisa had chosen the Santa Della Martino for her future place of abode, in consequence of many conversations she had held with Amanda respecting that society. Heloisa had been unable to inform her friend of the change she intended to make, fearing that any correspondence on the province grounds, on which the Abbess could proceed against her. Even in her appeal to the bishop, the utmost caution and secrecy had been observed, and she was not yet fully apprized; and amidst the confusion of the night, she remembered an old convent which she had long intended to visit. It was situated in the Province of Calabria, and was one of the oldest and most celebrated, but not the richest of the Province. Heloisa had been informed that the convent was not only a place of safety, but a place of refuge for those who were persecuted by the world and the devil.

the despondency, with which severe misfortune had obscured her views.

Amanda was very particular in her enquiries whether any person of the Monastery had suffered for the assistance they had rendered her; but learning that not one, except Heloisa had been suspected of having befriended her, and then heard with the greatest joy that the venerable Friar who had dared to unfasten the gate at such peril, and which had restored her to liberty, had not been involved in the suspicions.

“You must know,” said Heloisa, “that there is great risk, and it is a very unusual circumstance for a Nun to change her Convent; but you can perceive the strong reasons which determined me to remove, and perhaps I was the more impatient of severe treatment, since you my sister, had described this holy and happy society to me, and since I believed it possible that you might form a part of it. When on my arrival here I found that my wish had not deceived me in this respect, I was impatient to see you, once more, and as soon as the ceremony attending an introduction to the Superior was over, I requested to be conducted to you, and I was in search of you when we met in the avenue. I will not attempt to describe the happiness I feel at the very flattering reception I have met with here, not only from the Lady Abbess, but the Sisterhood in general; the gloom which has so long hung over my prospects, seems now to brighten, and a distant gleam seems to promise to lighten the sorrows that have so long oppressed me.”

Amanda silently gazed upon the expressive counten-



ance of the Nun, who now paused, and seemed to recollect herself; this was the first time she had ever hinted her sorrows to Amanda, who wished, yet feared to lead her back towards the subject of them, as she perceived a ray of dejection already stealing over her beautiful features.

Endeavouring to dismiss some painful remembrance, and assuming a smile of languid gaiety, Heloisa said—

“Come my love, now that I have in part related to you the circumstances of my removal to this place, will you indulge me with some few particulars relative to your adventures, since the melancholy adieu you gave me in the garden of Santa Floriano.”

“Indeed, my dear friend,” said Amanda, “although I feel rejoiced, and my spirits revived by your beloved society, yet I feel unequal to the task you impose at the present; at some future day I shall be more equal to the duty.”

She then merely stated a few particulars relative to her separation from Di Salvo, at Celano; and that a variety of the most distressing circumstances had intervened, before she had arrived at the Sanctuary of Della Madonna.

Heloisa understood but too well the kind of feelings, from which Amanda was desirous of escaping, to urge the subject any farther.

The friends continued in conversation, till a chime from the chapel of the Convent summoned them to the customary service, and when the service was concluded, they separated for the night, with a mutual promise to meet

early on the following morning, to take a walk in the garden of the Convent.

With her young friend and the society of La Martino, Heloisa had found an asylum, such as till now she never dared to hope for; but although she would frequently express her sense of this blessing, it was seldom without tears; and Amanda observed, with regret, that a cloud of melancholy would often spread itself again over her mind. But a nearer interest soon withdrew Amanda's attention from thinking of her friend Heloisa, to fix it upon Di Salvo. She was summoned one morning from one of her occupations, by a servant, who came to say that an old woman was waiting to speak to her in one of the outer rooms of the Convent. Amanda immediately went to her, and on entering the apartment, she was met by her old domestic Annetta. It instantly occurred to her, that probably some extraordinary event, or unhappy news had brought her to the Convent, and as the uncertain situation of Di Salvo was so constantly the subject of her anxiety, she immediately concluded that her servant came to announce some evil relative to him. His indisposition, perhaps his actual confinement in the Inquisition, which lately she had sometimes been inclined to think, might not have been a mere menace to Di Salvo, though it had proved to be no more to herself. Or he might be dead; this last idea almost rendered her incapable of enquiring the cause of her errand.

The old servant trembling and wan, either from the fatigue of her walk, or from a consciousness of the ill tidings she had to communicate, seated herself almost

without speaking, and it was some moments e'er she could answer the repeated questions of Amanda.

At length recovering herself in some degree, she exclaimed,—

“Ah! Signora! you do not know what it is to walk up hill such a long way, at my age! Well! may the blessed saints protect you, I hope you never will.”

Amanda interrupted her, by saying,—

“I am prepared my good Annetta, for whatever news you may have to tell me, so do not I pray you keep me any longer in suspence, as I perceive you have nothing good to communicate, and you need not fear to tell me all you know about.”

“Santa Maria!” exclaimed Annetta, “if death be ill news, you have guessed right, Signora; for I do bring news of that, it is certain. How came you, dear lady to know what brought me here? I thought I was the only person who had a chance of telling you the news they have been before-hand with me though I see, and yet I have not walked so fast up hill this many-a-day as I have now, to tell you what has happened.”

She stopped on perceiving the changing countenance of Amanda, who tremblingly begged of her to inform her instantly what had happened—who was dead, and to relate all the particulars as speedily as possible.

“Dear lady,” said Annetta, “you say you are prepared to hear all I have to tell you, but your looks tell another tale.”

“What is the purport of your journey hither,” said Amanda, greatly agitated, “what event have you to dis-

close, tell me. Ah! tell me; when did it happen, be brief," said she, almost breathless with surprise.

"I cannot tell exactly when it happened, but it was an own servant of the Marchioness's that I had it from."

"From the Marchioness's servant," faintly articulated Amanda."

"Yes, Signora, you must allow I could not have heard it from any one more likely to know the truth of it. But death you must know,—"

"Death! and had it from the servant," exclaimed Amanda in a fluttering voice, and almost ready to sink on the floor, "speak," she said. "Oh! pray speak, tell me; tell who is dead!"

"Dear lady you are ill," said Annetta in great alarm, "but indeed it is too true, I had it from the servant, he passed as I was speaking to the fisherman at the gate, and he said, 'well Annetta, how do you do to day,' I thanked him, and so we had a long chat,—"

"I beseech you say whose death did he tell you of," said Amanda.

"I cannot, till I come to the right place, Signora, and if you fluster me so, and should put me out, only bear a little patience and I will tell you all about it. Well my dear lady, he was in a great hurry at first, but when I asked him to walk in and take a little refreshment, he forgot his hurry; and so he stepped in and told me all about how it happened, and so I am now come to tell you."

"Ah! grant me patience," said Amanda, endeavouring to calm her agitation.

"Well, Signora, when he was seated, and I asked him again what had happened at the palace, and who he was in such deep mourning for, so he told me. 'Why you must know,' said he, 'it is near a month ago since she was taken ill first, the Marchioness had been—'"

"The Marchioness," replied Amanda; that one word had eased this heart at once; "the Marchioness!"

"Yes, Signora, to be sure, who else did I say it was."

"Go on with the relation," said Amanda, "go on good Annetta; the Marchioness—"

"Why my dear lady, what makes you look so glad all on a sudden? I thought but the other moment you was very sorry, and very greatly distressed about it, but, ah! I suppose you was thinking it to be my young lord Di Salvo that was dead."

"Proceed, good Annetta," said Amanda.

"Well, then," said she, "it was about a month ago that the Marchioness was first taken ill, she had been at a *Conversazione* at the Palace di Nuovo, from whence she returned home ill, and never went out after. The physician was much blamed for not informing her of her danger sooner, but he had his reasons for not telling her. The other doctors soon made their words come true, for my lady is dead."

"Is Di Salvo at home," enquired Amanda timidly.

"Ah! no my lady, he was not there to sooth her in her last hours; she would have given all she possessed to have seen him before she died, but he was not to be found, nor can they hear the least tidings of him since

the day he left me at the Villa Altieri, with strict charge to keep all safe till I saw him again. Lack a-day, I fear I shall never see him again."

"Not see him again," said Amanda.

"Ah! no," said Annetta, "every part of the country has been searched, but without success, he cannot even be heard of. No, nor his servant Bardo neither, who attended him."

"Then you are sure the Marchioness did not know where her son was," said Amanda, still more astonished and perplexed; for it appeared so strange that the person who had caused the arrest should have suffered him to escape.

"Ah! no, dear lady, she raved about him to the last, and would have given worlds to have seen him, to have received his forgiveness; then she confessed she had wronged him, she did indeed, and made full confession of all to her confessor, one father Raldino I think they call him, and—"

"What of him," said Amanda, abruptly.

"Nothing, Signora, for he could not be found, I make mistake—"

"Not be found," said Amanda; then recollecting herself, she forbore to ask any more questions about him, fearful she might betray the interest she felt in any thing that might concern him. At one time she was almost distracted with the idea that Di Salvo really was confined in the prisons of the Inquisition, and at another she would try to console herself that perhaps he was still engaged in searching for the place of her confinement.

While these thoughts were passing in the mind of Amanda, Annetta had sat patiently watching her, and had marked the workings of her countenance, and the extremes of hope and fear that had pervaded her imagination. At length her patience being exhausted, she interrupted her reverie by saying,

“But my dear Signora, what a bustle there was just when they thought my lady, the Marchioness was dying. As this father Raddino was not to be found, another confessor was sent for. I made mistake, it was not the father Raddino she made her confession to, he could not be found time enough to see her alive. This new confessor was a very good man, and he and my lord the marquis, were shut up with my lady for many hours before she died, and it was to him she made full confession of all that hung upon her mind. The marquis was often called into the room, and was heard by the attendants who were in the anti-room, to talk very loud; and sometimes my lady talked loud too, for all she was so ill. At these all was silent, and my lord came out of the room, and he seemed very much agitated and angry, and yet very sorrowful. But the confessor remained a long while after, and when he departed, my lady seemed more composed, and more resigned and happy. Still there was something that lay very heavy at her heart, for she sometimes wept bitterly, would groan, and call upon Di Salvo, and looked so piteous that I was greatly distressed to see her. She would frequently ask for the marquis to come to her, and when he entered the room she would order all the attendants to retire. And they would hold long conference together. The confessor



was also sent for again, and after he departed she appeared more easy in her mind, and not long after his departure the marquis went to her again for the last time. She lived all that night, and on the following morning expired. She was perfectly sensible to the last, and seemed truly penitent, and sorry for the faults she had been guilty of. Previous to her death, the Marchioness unburthened her conscience to the confessor, hoping to receive in return an alleviation of her despair. This confessor was a man of sense, and humanity; and when he perfectly understood the story of Amanda and Di Salvo, he affirmed the only hope of forgiveness for the acts she had meditated, as well as for the unmerited sufferings she had occasioned, rested upon her utmost exertions to make those now happy, whom so lately she had contributed to render miserable. Conscience had already given her the same lesson, and now that she was sinking to that state which levels all distinctions, and her pride was so humbled as no longer to oppose her ideas of reconciliation to their union, she became as anxious to promote it, as she had ever been to prevent it. She therefore sent for the marquis for the last time, and disclosed to him the arts she had practised, without however, confessing the full extent of her intended crimes to him, she made it her dying request that he would consent to the happiness of his son, and re-call him home for that purpose.

The marquis, however shocked at this discovery of the duplicity and cruelty of his wife, neither felt her terror for the future, nor remorse for the past, sufficiently to overcome his objection to the rank of Amanda; and he

risisted all her importunities, till the anguish of her last hours threw aside every consideration but that of affording her relief. He then gave a solemn promise in the presence of the confessor, that he would not in any way farther abstract the marriage of Di Salvo and Amanda, if the former should still retain his attachment to her. The promise satisfied the Marchioness, and she died with some degree of calmness, and resignation.



## CHAPTER XXVI.

I have in secret, hid  
Some silent tears, lost child, for thine and thee;  
And this was birth for me, -  
For my tears do but seldom leave their bed.

Annetta who had remained at the Convent the whole of the day, was sitting towards evening with Amanda in her apartment, conversing on various subjects, previous to her returning home, Amanda who had attended very earnestly to what she had been relating to her, was prevented from asking the circumstances of the death of the Countess, who, on perceiving that she would not be able to converse with her any longer, but, Annetta not considering this subject as important,

prevailed with the Nun to take a seat at the frame she had been working at.

After conversing a little with Heloisa, Amanda returned to Annetta, to give her instructions how to proceed till she saw her again. The absence of her father from the Convent appeared to her more than accidental, and though she scarcely knew how to introduce an inquiry relative to him, without betraying the interest and concern she felt about him; yet she ventured to ask her, whether she had lately seen the stranger who had restored her to her home.

"Ah, no, Signora," she replied, "I have never seen, or heard anything about him, since that blessed night he brought you safe to the Villa again. Oh! how I should like to see him again; but what do I say, I did not see him then, he was so muffled up; pardon me my lady, but I have thought many times, but now I am convinced it was not."

"Thought what, good Annetta, what did you think?" demanded Amanda, with great impatience.

"Why Signora, if you must know, I thought whether he might prove a rival to my lord Di Savo."

"Banish such thoughts," said Amanda, "I beseech you, how could you suppose such a thing."

"We cannot stop our thoughts you know, my lady; but now I am quite sure to the contrary: your fright to day lest it was my lord Di Salvo that was dead, has made me quite sure—"

While Annetta was speaking, Heloisa raising her eyes from the frame, had fixed them full upon the old servant; Annetta respectfully withdrew hers, and was

receiving some directions from her mistress, when Heloisa again fixed her eyes upon her with the most intense curiosity, and at the same time exclaimed,—

“Surely I ought to know that voice, and yet the features, if it is; ah! how altered! But,” said she, with the greatest emotion, “is it, can it be possible; is it the good Annetta.” Annetta earnestly regarded her, then raising her hands and eyes, she exclaimed, “Holy Saint Paul’s, can it be possible! sure my eyes must deceive me! yet there is a strange likeness. Oh! how it has fluttered me; my heart does so beat; the sight of you is so like the lady.—Ah! it is, it is the good Annetta,” said Heloisa, in the greatest agitation, and at the same time regarding Amanda, who had stood gazing at each with wonder and perplexity, at their words and manners. “Oh,” said the Nun, “tell me I beseech you, who is that dear lady? is it—can it be my?”—

The words died on her lips.

Annetta, wholly occupied by the different thoughts that had in quick succession rushed across her mind, gave no reply to the questions, but suddenly she exclaimed,—

“It is, in truth it is; it must be the lady Heloisa, ah! say dear lady, in the name of our Holy Saint, how came you here. O! how happy you must have been to have found each other; how was it, do pray tell me: did you think I thought you was gone, that my dear loved mistress was also come to join you?” she looked, still gazing with astonishment at Heloisa, while Amanda, unheard, repeatedly enquired the meaning of all she

heard and saw. But in the next moment she found herself pressed tenderly to the bosom of the Nun, who weeping, trembling, and almost fainting, held her there in silence. Annetta seemed equally astonished with Amanda, and at the same time asked an explanation of—and the cause of this emotion. “For,” said she, “can it be possible that you did know each other?”

“Ah!” exclaimed Amanda, trembling, and gazing tenderly and fearfully at the Nun, “what new discovery is this? Is it but lately that I have found my father! O! tell me by what tender name am I to call you?”

“Your father!” exclaimed Heloisa, with fresh agitation: “your father, lady:” at the same instant repeated Annetta.

Amanda, betrayed at the moment, by the emotions she felt, had prematurely mentioned the name of father, she now became strongly embarrassed, and was silent.

“No my child,” said Heloisa, much affected, while she again pressed Amanda to her throbbing heart, “No! thy father is in the cold grave.”

Amanda now became incapable of returning her embrace; surprise and doubt had suspended for a time every tender feeling; at length, gazing upon Heloisa with an intenseness that almost bordered upon wildness, she at length faintly articulated,—

“Is it indeed my mother, whom I now see? whom I now embrace,” said she, slowly laying her hand upon her bosom.

“It is your mother,” said she, pressing her to her

throbbing heart, "and may a parent's blessing rest with thee my child." Heloisa again tenderly embracing her, looked upon her with the utmost tenderness.

Amanda fell upon her knees to receive a loved parent's blessing, almost overwhelming herself with the various and acute feelings this discovery had occasioned. Heloisa was some minutes before she became sufficiently recovered to sooth the agitated spirits of Amanda; at length she gently raised her from her supplicating posture, and the tender affectionate caress was mutual. Annetta now stood silently gazing at them: she appeared lost in wonder and fear. Heloisa, when she had a little recovered, enquired for her sister Mariette, and but too plainly perceived from the sudden melancholy that overspread their features, that her worst fears were but too truly realized.

"Alas! dear lady!" said Annetta, "she is gone! Ah! she is now where I believed you were gone long ago, and I should as soon have expected to see her here as yourself."

Heloisa was in some measure prepared for the news of her sister's death, by finding Amanda settled at the Convent; yet she could not help feeling much, and deeply affected at the confirmation of the death of that beloved sister.

"Why," said Annetta, "did not the Lady Abbess inform you of her death? She is buried in the chapel of the Convent; and I am quite surprised she should have neglected to inform you."

"The Lady Abbess does not know of the relationship," said Heloisa, "she does not know who I really

am; and at present it is my most particular wish that she should not know; therefore my good Annetta, I pray you be careful not to disclose to any one this discovery. Even you my dear child, must be silent—must appear only as my friend, till I have made some necessary enquiries that are essential to my peace, and yours.”

Heloisa now asked an explanation of the words she had heard Amanda utter, with regard to having found her father; she was much embarrassed at the request, but it was now too late to observe the promise of secrecy, extorted from her by Raldino. She had unadvertently uttered the sentence in the first moment of surprise, and while she dreaded to transgress further the promise she had made him, she perceived that a full disclosure was now absolutely necessary and unavoidable.

Annetta now took her leave, and was desired by Amanda to visit the Convent again the following day, if she could, or send the articles she had named, by the gardener.

As soon as Annetta was gone, Amanda again repeated her assertion that her father still lived, that she had seen him, that he had himself owned her, although he did not for the present wish it made public—

“But,” continued Amanda, “I am every day, nay hour, expecting to see, or hear from him. Annetta’s account of his absence from his Convent still confirms the idea that he is preparing to publicly own me for his daughter.”

“His absence from his Convent,” repeated Heloisa, with the utmost astonishment, “what Convent?” said she.



"The San Spirito," answered Amanda, "whither he had secretly retired after he had conducted me back again to the Villa Antire; and he left me with strict injunctions to retire immediately to this sanctuary, and on pain of his severe displeasure, not to reveal to any one where I had been, or that I had discovered my parent.

Hedisa was silent for some moments, during which the tears flowed fast and afforded that relief to her overcharged heart, which the relation of Amanda had occasioned.

Recovering herself, she exclaimed "it is impossible, my dear child!"

She then named the year in which the Count, her real father had died; but as her mother had not witnessed his death, Amanda still believed it had not happened; and to confirm her late assertion that Raldino was indeed her father, she offered to produce the portrait which he had claimed as his own; when he acknowledged her as his child. Hedisa, greatly agitated, requested to see the miniature, and Amanda left the room immediately to fetch it. Hedisa paced the room in the greatest agitation during her absence, endeavouring to tranquillize herself, for some strange mystery seemed to dwell in the count's conduct, which she had heard, and which she could not understand. When Amanda returned, she found her mother in a state of extreme distress, and she ran to her, and kneeling by her side, and with the most supplicating shriek, she sunk senseless on the floor. Her mother, alarmed, immediately applied for her recovery, and Amanda then called her extremely for not

having more cautiously prepared her mother for the knowledge of his existence, as she really believed her emotions proceeded from over joy.

When Heloisa recovered from the swoon into which the sight of the features portrayed in the miniature had thrown her, she requested to be left alone with her daughter; and when the attendants had withdrawn she expressed a wish to look at the portrait again—she was still greatly agitated, but summoning all the fortitude she was capable of, as briefly informed Amanda it was not the portrait of her father, but of his younger brother.

"I know not by what means you became possessed of that portrait," said Heloisa, "but I again assure you it is the likeness of your uncle and my——second husband, she would have said, but the words died on her lips. He had a daughter but she died whilst very young."

She paused, was much affected at the recollection of past events which rushed across her mind; but presently she added, "I cannot at present explain the subject, it is too distressing, too painful. Let me rather consider the means of preventing either you or me from seeing your uncle, and if possible, conceal from him that I am still living; for you must know this much, he believes me dead long since."

Amanda then informed her mother that she had sent off a messenger to inform Raldino, that she wished to see him immediately, on an occasion of the greatest importance, but the messenger was returned, and had in-

formed her that the Confessor had been absent many weeks, nor did they know where he was gone.

This information brightened up the features of Heloise, for said she, with indelible emotion, "if he sees me, I am irrecoverably lost. Alas, my dear Amanda, your precipitancy had nearly been the loss of your only parent."

Now that Heloise was released from the dread of seeing the father Raldino, she consented to explain some part of her history, chiefly those parts which would prove most interesting to Amanda; but it was some time ere she could sufficiently command her spirits to relate the whole of her narrative. The first part of it perfectly corresponded and agreed with the account delivered in the confession to the penitentiary Anselmo, and that which followed was known only to herself, her sister Marietta, a physician, and one faithful servant, who had been entrusted with the whole transactions.

It will be recollected that Raldino left his house immediately after the fatal act, which was designed to be fatal to the countess, his wife, and that she was carried senseless to her chamber. The wound as appears, was not mortal, but the atrocity of the act determined the countess to seize the opportunity, during the absence of Raldino, to release herself from his tyranny, without having recourse to have recourse to a court of justice, as she knew, therefore, from his house for ever, and yet to the satisfaction of the three persons just mentioned to her, into the room of Countess Della Floriana,

a report of her death was confirmed at home, by a credible funeral; her sister Marietta undertook the care

of the two children, the one, a daughter by the first count, which was Amanda, and the other daughter by Raldino,—the latter died when she was but two years old; and it was their likeness, and the portrait being in her possession that had led Raldino to believe that she was his daughter. He had never heard of the death of his own child, or of either of them.

After some weeks had elapsed, Marietta purchased the estate of the Villa Altiero, whither she retired with her young charge, fearing to reside at a spot where there was a possibility of being near, or of seeing Raldino, and she durst not take a house near the Convent, fearful she might be watched, and by that means the countess would be discovered.

Marietta had been in the habit of regularly corresponding with her sister Heloisa, and giving her an account of the welfare of her daughter; but Marietta's death had been so sudden, and the removal of Amanda equally so, that there were several letters unopened, which Annetta had taken care of,—but which, not having been answered, had caused Heloisa much painful anxiety.

This, no doubt was the subject which seemed to hang so heavy upon the mind of the lady Marietta, when she was struck speechless, and which illness caused her death. The miniature Amanda had found in the cabinet after her aunt's decease, with other jewels: it was inscribed with the count's name, and she had worn it with a filial fondness and affection for his memory, ever since that period.

Marietta, when she had acquainted Amanda with the

secret of her birth, forbore to name that her mother still lived, from the best of motives; but had she been permitted to speak, she certainly would have disclosed the whole transactions relative to her parents before her death.

Annetta was not the faithful servant who was entrusted with the escape of the countess, therefore had believed him dead; and though she knew Amanda to be the daughter of the countess, she could never have been a means of discovering them to each other, had not the lady Heloisa recognized the old and faithful servant of her sister Marietta.

The lady Marietta had given Amanda the name of Lusinetta, to protect her from being discovered by her uncle; and this name had prevented the lady Heloisa from discovering that Amanda was in reality her child, when she had first seen her at the Convent of Santa Floriano; still the resemblance she bore to the count her father, had painfully and forcibly struck her.

When the lady Marietta came to reside at the Villa Altire, she little thought that the uncle of Amanda was residing so near her, or she would have again removed her residence: but she seldom walked out, and when she did, it was only to church, and then she was closely veiled, - therefore, there was little chance of his recognizing her; besides she also bore the name of Lusnetta.

On the other hand, the count, (or as we shall call him,) Rosano, never went abroad without his Monk's cowl, so that they were completely concealed from a knowledge of each other, if they had met.

The lady Marietta had told Di Salvo on the night she gave him the hand of her neice, at the pavilion, that she had much to inform him of when they next met, so that it appears to have been her intention to have disclosed to him her formerly and real name, before their nuptials were solemnized; but her sudden death had prevented such information. It may appear rather extraordinary that she did not make the disclosure sooner, as that might have prevented the objections made by the family of Di Salvo: but her reasons were best known to herself, for not doing so. One reason might be, the affairs of Raldino had become so embarrassed through his extravagance after his marriage with the countess, that the income arising from his landed property, had immediately after his flight, been seized by his creditors, and Amanda was then left wholly dependent upon her aunt. The small fortune of Marietta had been much diminished by the assistance she had rendered her sister, on her entrance into the convent; and the rest of her property had been considerably reduced after, by the purchase of the Villa Altieri. Perhaps she might be blamed for this purchase, as it so materially reduced her income; but she excelled in many ingenious arts, and the production of her pencil and needle, were privately disposed of by the Nuns of the Santa Della Mortino, to the different ladies who attended at the grate of the Convent, to make purchases. Thus she enjoyed the independance of a pleasant home, and the comforts arising from her own industry: and when Amanda was old enough to assist her, she taught her the beautiful art of drawing and embroidery, with many other works

of ingenuity and elegance; and her works were, from their richness and beauty, in continual demand at the grate of the Convent.

During this long period, the lady Heloisa had lived a life dedicated to piety and devotion, in the Monastery of Santa Della Floriano; a life which she had willingly chosen, rather than endure the society of the detested Count, her second husband.

In this sanctuary her mind became softened by grief, for the death and remembrance of her first lord. And the first years of her retirement were passed in tranquility, except when the remembrance of her child, whom she had not, nor had dared to see at the Convent, awakened a parental pang. With her sister Marietta she corresponded as often as an opportunity presented, and had the happiness and consolation at least, of knowing that the object most dear to her, was good and lovely,—and lived to be her greatest comfort and treasure; and she had received the joyful and consoling intelligence that she was well and happy, till within a short period of her arrival at the Convent of Santa Della Floriano, the very asylum chosen by her mother, and whose fears and apprehensions had been in some degree excited, by the unusual silence of her sister.

When the lady Heloisa had first seen Amanda in the chapel of Santa Floriano, she was instantly struck with the strong resemblance she bore the Count, her first husband; and she had many times afterwards, examined, and gazed upon her features with the most painful feelings of curiosity to know who she was, but she had not the most distant idea that she was her own child



Once, however, as she sat talking with her, an involuntary sense of this possibility so far overcame her, that she ventured to ask the surname of Amanda : but when she mentioned the name of Lusinetta, all further enquiry ceased ; still the likeness she bore, and her own engaging sweetness of manners, had so far interested the Nun in her behalf,—independant of her forlorn distressing situation, that she determined to befriend her ; and at all hazards, to assist her escape, should a possibility or opportunity offer. But what would have been the feelings of the Nun, had she been told that her generous sympathy and compassion were excited, not to assist a stranger, but for the preservation of her child ; her only and beloved daughter ! What a contrast between the two characters of the mother and the uncle ! The first is worthy of remark,—as the amiable feelings of the lady Heloisa exerted to assist, as she supposed an entire stranger, had been rewarded by the happiness of having saved her child from misery, and perhaps death. While the crimes of Raldino had as unconsciously urged him on to destroy his niece, and had always been preventing by these means, the very success he was constantly aiming at. And it is to be hoped that, as in this instance, virtuous actions will always meet their just reward ; while on the other hand, vice will be sure to meet with its due, and certain punishment.

Had the lady Amanda unfortunately have been placed under the care and guard of the rigid, austere, unfeeling Nun Peppina, she never would have known and felt the blessings of liberty again : or have had the unspeakable happiness to have been acknowledged by any ami-

able and beloved parent, whose society alone could impart every tender feeling. And again,—had the father Raldino, also practised those virtues which his sacred character imposed, nay, even demanded; and which he ought to have enforced, both by precept and example, he had met with virtue's reward,—he had been happy,—as it was his extravagance, and love of pleasure first led him astray, and brought him to want. And then *envy*, that most baneful of all passions soon took deep root in his heart, and led him to commit those crimes which were ultimately sure to work his ruin, and bring on everlasting disgrace. For while his whole time and thoughts were occupied in destroying the peace and happiness of others, he was unconsciously working, and ensuring his own everlasting destruction, both here and hereafter. For certain it is, that,

When the last trumpet calls the dead to rise,  
And countless millions fill the vaulted skies;  
When ranks, distinctions, shall be laid aside,  
And only *good* and *ill* mankind divide:  
Justice to all, th' impartial Judge shall give;  
The bad shall fall, the just for ever live.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

And dost thou ask me whence this gloom,  
Why grief usurps the place of mirth ?  
Would'st thou have laughter from the tomb  
Of every joy and hope on earth ?

The lady Janetta Durezzo had been some weeks at the palace of the Duke of Castelamme, and was still unwilling to leave her in her distress ; the Duke's health still continued very declining, and he was ordered by his physician to try change of air, as that was the last resource, the only remaining hope that would benefit him. But it was a long time ere the united persuasions of his friends, or the entreaties of his greatly afflicted, and affectionate wife could prevail upon him to consent ; so very reluctant was he to leave home, and indeed he felt his strength would be almost unequal to the voyage. At length after the earnest persuasions of his most intimate friends, and the continued entreaties of his beloved Rosalba, the Duke yielded to their united solicitations, and consented to comply with their wishes, on condition that the Duchess, her father, the good old Count di Langaró, and the lady Janetta should accom-

pany him. The latter expressed her willingness, and the pleasure she should feel with the consent of her parents, to accompany him and the Duchess. The Count declared his willingness to acquiesce, but said, he feared his age and infirmities would not make his company very desirable, but as it was the wish of the Duke that he should be of the party, he readily consented.

It was then a matter of long consultation as to which part of the world would be the best to resort to, or which would most benefit the health of the invalid.

The physician gave his opinion that the mild climate of Italy, or the southern part of France, was most likely to prove beneficial. As all places were alike to the rest of the party, so as it was congenial to the inclination of the Duke, it was left for him to say, and he chose Italy for the place of resort.

It was therefore agreed that they should set out as soon as the necessary preparations were completed. During the interval of their being in readiness to commence their journey, a confidential servant was immediately dispatched to select a proper residence, and to make every preparation for their reception, on their arrival in Italy.

The lady Janetta was now obliged to return home, to acquaint her parents with the wishes of the Duke and Duchess of Castelanie, and to make arrangements, and prepare to accompany them. The lady Janetta had never corresponded with her brother; she now anticipated the pleasure she should experience in meeting him, in that delightful country, and of being introduced

to the lovely lady Celestina Montaldo, of whom he had in his letters given her such a lively and interesting description, and whom he had taught her to love and admire, ere she had seen her.

How great then must have been the shock she sustained, when on her arrival at the Villa Pietro, she found her dear parents plunged into the deepest sorrow and most unspeakable grief; by the arrival of her brother's servant from Italy, with the dreadful account of his fatal encounter, and death, in the subteraneous passage of the Convent of the Santa Della Catarina! Indeed the shock was so great, as well as the grief she felt for the loss of her beloved brother, that it was some time before she could compose and collect herself sufficiently to write an account of the awful catastrophe to her friend, the Duchess of Castelamme, and to lament the sad event that had deprived her of a dearly beloved and only brother; and which also would prevent her returning there at the appointed time, to accompany them to Italy.

Edgordo had brought letters with him wherein it was stated, that Lorio, when he found he was dying, had particularly requested to have his remains deposited where his beloved Celestina might be laid beside him, when it should please her maker to summon her from this world.

The Count di Gracio being on a visit at the Villa Pietro, when the dreadful news arrived; after the Marquis had a little recovered from the shock such sad intelligence was calculated to produce; they consulted together about the best means of having the remains of

his unfortunate son conveyed home for interment, for he could not endure the thought of his being buried in a distant land. The Count therefore engaged to take a journey to Italy, for the express purpose of seeing that the remains of the unfortunate Lorio Durazzo were safely conveyed home ; the Marquis being too much afflicted at his loss, to undertake the sad office himself.

As his son had expressed a dying wish that the remains of the lady Celestina should be buried near him, it was arranged, with her father's consent, that she should be conveyed also with Lorio, to be interred in the family vault of the Marquis Durazzo, at Naples.

On the Count's arrival in Italy, he immediately hastened to the Villa of the Count di Montaldo, and found that the bodies were laid in state, until such time as news arrived from Naples. They had both been removed from the Convent of Della Catarina to the Villa of Montaldo, and were deposited in the great hall. The lofty room was hung with black, the coffins were placed on a bier, side by side ; four lighted tapers continually burning, and nates were placed to keep watch until the day of removal for interment. Every four hours the priest entered the room to offer up so many *Ave Marias* for the repose of their souls. The front hall entrance was thrown open a few hours every day, and also the entrance to the apartment, where any respectable stranger was permitted to enter, and view the solemn scene.

As the Count di Gracio entered the apartment, he felt deeply affected, and it was some time before he could compose himself sufficiently to solicit an interview with

the Count di Montaldo. At length, feeling the necessity there was for exerting himself to fulfil the task he had undertaken for his friend, he left the dreary apartment and hastened to the other part of the house; he rung at the portal, and the Count's confidential servant attending, he requested to see his master; Marco said his master had not seen any person since the fatal catastrophe, which had plunged the whole household into the deepest grief, for the lady Celestina was generally beloved by every one who knew her. However he sent up his card, and the purport of his visit, and requested an interview immediately. Marco invited the Count to walk into the drawing room, and said he would instantly deliver his card and the message, and express to his master the necessity there was for him to have an interview immediately.

After waiting a considerable time, the servant entered to say, his master would see him, and he was accordingly conducted by Marco to his master's library.

On entering the study, the Count Montaldo rose to meet the Count di Gracio, and with a melancholy saddened voice, begged of him to be seated. They were both so completely overwhelmed with feeling, and especially Montaldo, with distress, that some moments elapsed ere either could enter upon the subject which had introduced them to each other. The Count di Gracio at length broke the silence, by feelingly enquiring the particulars which had caused the death of the unhappy pair.

Montaldo as briefly as possible, and as well as his agitated feelings would permit him, related the sad



events, and all he knew or could learn of the unhappy affair.

The Count then stated the purport of his journey to Italy, and expressed the wish of the Marquis Durazzo, that the remains of the lady Celestina should be conveyed with those of his beloved son, and buried in the family vault with him, in the San Spirito at Naples.

After some further conversation on the subject, the Count di Montaldo consented to the arrangement, saying,—

“It is my intention to quit Italy as soon as possible, and as it is immaterial to which quarter of the globe I go, I will accompany the remains of my departed child to Naples, when after having seen them deposited in the silent tomb, I will take up my abode at the Santo Spirito Convent, and wait the appointed time when I shall be summoned to take up my abode with her.”

Here his feelings so overpowered him at the recollection of her angelic sweetness, and the resignation with which she had endured both illness and persecution, and entirely through his harsh conduct towards her, that he mentally exclaimed,—

“Oh! I am not worthy to be re-united to her; I am indeed lost; I have committed crimes beyond forgiveness.”

The Count Di Gracio felt exceedingly for his distress; when having waited a little for him to recover from the paroxysm of grief which now oppressed him, he endeavoured to sooth his mind by holding out the hope that there is pardon to the greatest sinner that repents; and that he ought to rejoice that his daughter was transport-

ed to those happy regions where trouble and sorrow could never more assail her, and where her patience and resignation in this life would meet its reward.

Montaldo thanked him for the sympathy of his expressions, and seemed grateful for his kind advice and consolation. When after having conversed some little time, the Count became sufficiently composed to listen to arrangements being made for the removal of the unfortunate Lorio Durazzo and the lady Celestina Montaldo to Naples. And it was agreed that the Count Di Gracio should take up his residence at the Count Di Montaldo's, and see to every preparation being made to commence the journey that day week. The Count Di Gracio then retired for a short time to visit a particular friend he had residing in the city; and Montaldo summoned his servant Marco, and bid him instantly commence preparations for leaving the Villa that day week. Marco then informed his master that on his going to the post office that morning he had noticed a printed paper that was stuck up at the printer's shop close by. It was a notice that if any gentlemen had a house that was ready furnished to let for a period, or to dispose of, terms were to be sent to Paulo Neco, 45, Strada Reale, as soon as possible. Marco was desired to go immediately to Paulo Neco; and if he found the parties respectable to bring them to Montaldo; for if he could let his Villa for the present, he would do so until he could properly arrange for the disposal of it altogether.

In a short time Marco returned and Paulo with him. He was shewn up into the Count's Library, who then

enquiring the name of his master, was informed, he was the Duke of Castelmore, a Sicilian nobleman, who was visiting that country for the benefit of his health.

The Count di Montaldo highly approving the parties, terms were immediately entered into for their taking possession, as tenants, as soon as they thought proper, after that day week. And if the parties, on their arrival, approved of the situation and wished to purchase, they could do so, as the property would be left in the hands of a proper agent for disposal. Paulo then received a written agreement, granting the use of the whole estate, ready furnished as it was, for three months from the date of that day week, when he was to take possession of the same, in the name of the Duke of Castelmore.

Paulo now sent off dispatches to inform his master of the good success he had met with, in having procured so desirable a residence, for their reception; the Villa being most delightfully situated on the beautiful banks of the Arno.

The Duke and Duchess would have received this intelligence with the greatest pleasure, had not the news arrived but a few hours before, of the unforrunate death of Lorio Durazzo, which sad event would deprive them of the lively society of the amiable lady Janetta. However as every thing was ready for their **embarkation**; and the Duke feeling anxious either to commence the journey or to give it up, they set sail the following morning with a favourable wind and every prospect of a pleasant voyage.

On the morning appointed, the procession moved slowly from the Villa di Montaldo, followed by a great

crowd of spectators who had collected together to see the embarkation. Every eye glistened with a tear to testify their feelings of sorrow for the melancholy fate of the amiable lady Celestina Montaldo, who had been so generally admired and beloved by all who knew her ; and whose unfortunate and untimely death would long be lamented by her friends and numerous acquaintance. The two coffins were placed in a hearse, and the arms and escutcheons of Montaldo were laid on the pall which was thrown over them. The Countess Montaldo and Di Gracia followed in one carriage, and numerous friends and acquaintances in others in due order. In the first coach were six youths who were bearers. On their arrival at the place of embarkation the two coffins were placed in one boat, mournfully hung with black, and rowed to the ship by six youths in deep mourning. There followed the boat containing the count Montaldo, supported by his faithful Marco ; and the count Di Gracio attended by his servant Rollo, each habited in deep mourning, and all having on long black cloaks and crape hatbands.

As the procession moved slowly along, and until after the ships got out of the harbour, all the great bells of the different churches they had to pass tolled the minute peal ; and every lip seemed to be offering up the ' Ave Maria ' for the repose of their souls.

The sky was very lowering and dark ; and as the party went on board, the wind whistled amongst the caverns of the rocks ; and the rain fell in such torrents as almost to threaten a deluge. Fortunately before the

ships got under weigh the dark clouds dispersed, and she set sail with a favourable gale.

The same morning that the remains of Lorio Durazzo and the lady Celestina Montaldo were removed for interment, the abbot Augustine was led from his dungeon to undergo the sentence of the law passed on him for the crimes he had been guilty of. The crowd testified their feelings by loud groans and hisses, and would have torn him piecemeal could they have had their own way with him.

Augustine, as he was led to the scaffold, betrayed no symptom of fear or agitation: whether subtilty enabled him to appear thus calm, or hardihood and joy that his revenge was satiated, we cannot say, but it is certain that his manner expressed no feeling of guilt or agitation; he was perfectly calm and collected, and his steps firm and steady; and he was launched into eternity without his evincing one ray of remorse, or making one sentence of confession that he was penitent or had done wrong.

On the third day after the count Di Montaldo had left his Villa, the Duke and Duchess of Castelmore, with the Count Di Langaro and suite arrived at it. The Duke felt greatly fatigued from the Voyage although it had been a very favourable wind all the passage; but it was sincerely hoped that a few days' rest, and the delightfully pleasant residence they had been so fortunate as to meet with, would have the desired effect on his spirits, and that he would feel better to enjoy it. The Villa and the Vineyards adjoining their residence belonged to a most friendly and interesting family, the

Baron of Ferata and his lady. The two families soon became very intimate, as the lively conversation of the Baron aroused the Duke from the melancholy that would at times oppress him, and they in a short time became almost inseparable.

They were daily expecting to see their only son, who was returning from England, whither he had been to complete his education.—Gonsalvo was in his twentieth year, and from the description given of him, was a very amiable promising young man.

The Baroness had under her protection, a young and lovely female, which she had adopted; her only parent having died at their house, and left his only daughter an orphan in a foreign land. The Baron had given his promise to see to the arrangement of his affairs, and in a few years to take his daughter home safe to England. The Duchess was charmed with the Baroness, who was an English lady,—and pleased with the open amiable disposition of Miss Evelin;—and their time was spent in that friendly happy intercourse, which only enlightened minds can truly enjoy. But this happy society was at length interrupted in their enjoyment, by the change which again appeared in the Duke's health, and the physician expressed his fears that their hopes would not be realized by the change of climate.

The Count di Langaro had seen, with the utmost anxiety, that the Duke was not benefited in the least by the change; but expressed his fear that the Duke fretted much, and regretted having left his home; he therefore, one day that they were alone, named the subject

to him, and begged he would say whether he had a wish to remain longer in Italy, or would it be more congenial to his wishes to return home.

The Duke casting upon him a languid look, replied—

“I most sincerely wish I had never attempted to come hither, it has done me more harm than good; yet I am fully sensible of all your kindness, and that in persuading me to make the trial of a change, you did it from the best of motives. But now I should wish to have immediate preparation made for my return home, while I am able to bear the fatigue of the voyage, for I think it will add to my composure and happiness of my last moments, to see my beloved child again, and to die under my own roof.”

He paused. The Count was much affected at his request, and earnestly entreated him to calm his fears, and to keep his mind as composed as possible, he assured him he would see to the necessary arrangements being made immediately; and sincerely hoped that the return home would be of more benefit to him than his voyage to Italy had been.

The Duke with a faint smile shook his head, and expressed his gratitude for all the anxiety expressed on his account.

The Count then hastened to acquaint the Duchess with the conversation that had just passed, which again awakened every fear in her mind as to his recovery.

The Baron and Baroness di Ferata were just arrived, and in the saloon with the Duchess, when the Count entered to communicate the Duke's wishes. They were most piteously grieved at the idea of being so soon sepa-



rated, but as it must be, they promised to visit Sicily on their way to England in the following spring, where they sincerely hoped to find the Duke restored to health: in the mean time it was agreed that they should keep up a regular correspondence.

On the arrival of the vessel in the Bay of Naples, the Count di Gracio found that every preparation had been made to receive her. Dispatches had been sent, to say that the Count di Montaldo would attend his daughter's remains to Naples, to witness their interment in the same vault with Lorio Durazzo; and the Marquis had ordered every preparation to be made for their reception. Boats were sent out early in the morning to convey the parties on shore, where the Marquis Durazzo, accompanied by the relations and friends of the deceased Lorio waited to receive them. The coffins were taken from the boats and placed in the hearse, and the Counts di Montaldo and di Gracio entered the same carriage with the Marquis Durazzo and his brother; the rest of the party each took their seats in the different carriages prepared for them; the procession then moved slowly forward towards the city.

The Marquis Durazzo's private vault was in the church of the San Spirito.

It was evening when the procession reached the church, which was hung with black, and all the tapers at the different shrines were lighted. The church was crowded to excess long before the procession arrived: each respectable person was habited in deep mourning, and all seemed anxious to testify their feelings of regret and respect for the memory of the unfortunate Lorio

Durazzo, where many private virtues had endeared him to a numerous acquaintance, and whose memory would long be cherished and remembered by them.

The procession now entered the church ; the corpses were met by the father Antonio, private confessor to the Marquis, and two of his brethren, who were to perform the sacred rites. They proceeded to the foot of the altar where the coffins were placed. The numerous servants, and dependants of the Marquis were all in attendance, and listened with reverence and attention to the long discourse of the holy father. His voice at first trembled and faltered from feeling, but soon recovering, he in a most pathetic manner expatiated on the many virtues of the deceased. He painted in the most lively colours, the patient resignation with which the unhappy lady Celestina had borne a long period of persecution and ill health, and of the fervent piety that had always distinguished her amiable character. He also pronounced a pompous elegy on the birth and rank of the departed, and portrayed with the most energetic feeling the joys prepared for the righteous, and of the unspeakable loss of the Marquis, in having lost so amiable, so promising a son, whose many excellent qualities and private benevolence would long be lamented and bitterly regretted. His audience were dissolved in tears ; he had been to many of them a most sincere friend and benefactor.

“I see,” said he, as he concluded his discourse, “it is needless for me to dwell on the severe loss you have sustained, or bid you remember, and imitate the virtues of this excellent youth. You have many of you felt his

unaffected benevolence and kindness : and I trust while you live, his memory will be cherished with respect and gratitude."

When the holy father ceased, he looked around and saw that most of the assembly wore the appearance of reverence and sorrow ; he then, with the two brethren who had accompanied him, performed high mass. When this was ended, they prepared to commit the bodies to the earth.

The Marquis and the Count had exerted themselves, and kept up their spirits to the utmost ; but when the coffins were lowered into the vault, and hid from their view, they could bear no more. The Marquis was borne almost senseless from the church, and the greatest consternation now prevailed throug the edifice, for the unhappy Count di Montaldo had received so severe a shock by the fatal death of his unhappy child, that he sunk under the trial, and anguish of his feelings ; and when the holy father sprinkled the earth upon the coffins, and pronounced the appalling words, 'dust to dust,' he could bear no more, but fell lifeless into the tomb, on the remains of his departed child. He was instantly taken from the vault, and every assistance rendered and restoratives applied, but ineffectually: all human aid was now unavailing, the vital spark was flown for ever ; and it is sincerely hoped that his contrite penitent spirit, was permitted to join that of his hapless daughter.

The Marquis Durazzo was exceedingly shocked and affected, when he heard of the sudden death of the Count di Montaldo, whose remains were removed to the Convent of the Santo Spirito to lie in state, and be prepared

to be interred in the same vault with his daughter.

The Marquis for a long time was inconsolable for the loss of his beloved son, but time,—the mitigator of all our sorrows, soothed his mind into calm resignation to endure his irreparable loss; and with piety and hope to await the period when he should be re-united to him in the realms of eternity and bliss.



## CHAPTER XXVIII.

And is life but a fleeting shade?  
And man but like an autumn day?  
Man that's so fair, so wond'rous made,  
Born but to blossom and decay.

One! a better hope we have!  
When autumn's gone, and winter's past;  
A spring of life to cheer the grave,  
And man, immortal, rise at last.

Di Salto still remained a prisoner in the dungeons of the Inquisition, a prey to all the torture of suspense and uncertainty, his distressing situation was calculated to create. In vain did he attempt, or hope to be enabled to acquaint his family with his perilous situation, for Bardo was a prisoner, like himself, and almost as strictly watched and guarded. Every time the sentinel en-

tered with his food, he anxiously looked at him, in hopes of recognizing the same features, and the same guide with whom he had interceded for Bardo. But the guard seemed changed altogether from that night.

While Di Salvo was languishing in this hopeless state, the Marquis was doing all in his power to discover, and recal his son; and however shocked he might be at the discovery of the duplicity in his wife, and willing to fulfil the promise he had made her, it did not appear probable, at least for the present, that he would be called upon to fulfil the engagement into which he had so willingly entered, in order to ease her tortured mind during her last moments, for every enquiry after Di Salvo had hitherto been ineffectual.

During this long and fruitless search for his son, and while the Marquis was almost lamenting him as dead, the family—and indeed all the inhabitants of the palace, were one night aroused from sleep and dreadfully alarmed, by a violent knocking at the great gate of the court. The knocking was so loud, and incessant, that before the porter could obey the summons, the Marquis, whose apartment looked down into the court, was greatly alarmed, and sent his servant Lupo to enquire the cause of it.

The moment the porter opened the gate, a person rushed in, all ragged and dirty, and made his way immediately into the hall, and before he would answer any of the numerous questions put to him by the affrighted domestics, demanded instant admittance to the Marquis:

“I must, I will see my lord Marquis directly,” said

he, "he will not be angry with you nor me, for having disturbed him, when he knows what a sad affair has brought me here in such a hurry."

The servants, however, hesitated to conduct him to their master; he pushed by them, ascended the great stair-case, and before the Marquis could order that no person should be admitted to his presence on any business whatever, Bardo, (for it was him,) appeared before him. Poor fellow, he was all ragged and very dirty, and such a figure, and at such an unseasonable hour, seemed to indicate some dreadful news of Di Salvo; and the Marquis had scarcely power to ask his errand, or to enquire for his son.

Bardo, however, spared him the trouble of asking any questions, and instantly delivered him from his painful state of suspense, by informing him that he had travelled with all possible speed ever since the moment he had got his liberty, to tell him, that he had left his dear master the Signor di Salvo, in the prison, and under the guard of the dreadful Inquisition at Rome.

"A prisoner in the Inquisition at Rome," exclaimed the Marquis, almost palsied by the horrid intelligence.

"Yes, my lord," said Bardo, "he is indeed there, if they have not put an end to him before this time; I am just got out myself, but he is too closely guarded ever to make his escape; and as they would not let me be with the Signor, so it was of no use to stay any longer there. He does not know that I am escaped from their dreadful fangs, if he did it would ease his sad heart a little, for he would be sure I should instantly let you know where he was. However, as I could not let him

know, I set off instantly ; I gained my liberty to tell you, so here I am my lord. But it was a hard matter with me, to go away and leave my dear master within those dismal walls ; and nothing should have persuaded me to do so, but that I hoped, when your lordship knew where he was, you might be able with a little of your power, to get him out again. *Santa Maria* how I have run, and walked, and famished ; yes, my lord, I am so hungry, for I have not tasted a bit or drop to day, I was in such a hurry to see you. Pray Signor may I just go down into the hall, and,—but what am I talking about, there is not a minute to be lost my lord, for when once these devils of Inquisitors get any body in their claws, there is no knowing how soon they may take it into their heads to tear him to pieces. And all for nothing my lord, for I can swear by our holy saint, that the Signor, your son, had not done any one single act, that can authorize those vile Inquisitors to hold him so closely penned up in those horrid dismal walls. *O Santa Maria!* if you had ever seen any of these black-guards, Signor, who watch over and torture the poor creatures that unfortunately fall into their power, you would not sit there so quietly. Shall I order horses for Rome my lord ? I am ready to set out again directly."

The suddenness of such awful intelligence, concerning an only son, might have agitated stronger nerves than those of the Marquis di Salvo ; and so much was he shocked by it, that he could not determine how to proceed in the affair, or give any decisive answer to Bardo's repeated questions.



When, however, he became sufficiently re-collected, he said, earnestly regarding Bardo's pitiable figure,—

“You had better, my good fellow, go and change your apparel and refresh yourself, for I perceive you stand greatly in need of the one, and I have no doubt will be glad of the other.”

“Never mind my figure, my lord,” with great impatience, “nor the refreshment you are so kind to recommend, so that you will but say I shall go and give your orders for the horses directly, for I must with your permission Signor, ride back again, for I am very tired and weary with fatigue; but I shall soon be recovered from my fatigue, if you will but go. Shall I—

“Be calm, my good Bardo,” said the Marquis, “we will set out instantly we can get ready; but it will be absolutely necessary I should consult with some friends, whose connections at Rome may be a means of greatly facilitating your masters' release; and as this cannot be done until the morning, I request you will go and change your clothes, take some refreshment and a little rest, and I will see that Lupo orders the horses to be ready by the time I have made the necessary arrangements.”

“Grazia Signor, Grazia,” said the delighted Bardo, and away he ran down into the hall.

When Bardo had left the room the Marquis sat down to consider of the best means to be adopted for the release of his beloved son; he perceived the necessity for an immediate journey, as any delay might prove fatal. He also perceived the necessity of obtaining the advice

of some of his friends, as many of them had great influence in that city.

He, however, gave orders to his servant Lupo, to see that every thing was in readiness at a minute's notice to set off. Although Bardo stood so much in want of rest, yet he was in too great an agitation of spirits either to seek or to find it; and the very great fear he had expressed and indicated on entering the Marquis's apartment, proceeded from the hurry of his mind, rather than from any positive apprehension of new evil. With regard to his own liberty, he was indebted for it to the young Sentinel, who on a former occasion had been removed from the door of his prison, but who, by means of the Guard, to whom Di Salvo had given the purse of money, as he returned one night from the tribunal, had since been able to communicate with him.

This man was of a character too feeling and humane for his situation; he was become wretched in it, and he determined to escape from his office before the time expired for which he was engaged. He thought that to be a guard over prisoners was nearly as miserable as being a prisoner himself.

"I see no difference between them," said he, "except that the prisoner watches on one side of the door, and the sentinel on the other."

With the resolution to release himself, he had confided the secret and held consultation with Bardo, whose good nature and feeling heart, among so many persons of a contrary character, had won his confidence and affection; and he laid his plan of escape so well, that it was on the point of succeeding, when Bardo's obstinacy

in attempting an impossibility, had nearly counteracted the whole. He could not bear the idea of making his escape, without first trying to release his dear master also. It went to his heart, he said, to leave him in prison, while he himself was to march off in safety; and he would run the risk of his neck rather than go without him. He therefore proposed as Di Salvo's guards were of too ferocious a nature to be persuaded to assist in his liberation, to scale a wall of the court into which a grate of Di Salvo's dungeon looked. But had this lofty wall been practicable, the grate was not, and the attempt had nearly cost Bardo not only his liberty but his life.

This no doubt was the affair that the guard had related to Di Salvo on the last night of the meeting of the tribunal, when he was conducting him back to the prison.

When at length Bardo had made his way through the perilous avenues of the prison, and was fairly beyond the walls, he could scarcely be prevailed upon by his companions to leave them. For near an hour he wandered under their shade, weeping and exclaiming and calling upon his dear master, at the evident hazard of being re-taken; and probably he would have remained there much longer, had not the dawn of morning rendered his companion quite desperate with him.

At length, the terror of being discovered, compelled his companion to force him from the spot; when having lost sight of the building which enclosed Di Salvo, he set off for Naples with a speed that defied all interruption, and arrived there in the condition which has just been described: having taken no sleep, and scarcely

any sustenance since he left the Inquisition. Yet, though in this exhausted state, the spirit of his affection remained unbroken, and when on the following morning the Marquis quitted Naples, neither his weariness nor the imminent danger to which this journey must expose him, could prevent his attending him to Rome.

The high birth and rank of the Marquis di Salvo, and the influence he was known to possess at the court of Naples, were circumstances that promised to have great weight with the grand Vicar of the Holy Office, and to procure Di Salvo a much more speedy release. The Marquis also carried with him letters of introduction to the Count di Romano, who was brother to one of the most intimate friends whom he had consulted prior to his leaving home ; and who having great connections and high influence in the church of Rome, promised to exert himself to procure the release of the unhappy Di Salvo. The applications, however, which were made to the grand Inquisitors, were not so soon replied to as the wishes of the Marquis had expected, and he had been above a fortnight in the city of Rome, before he was even permitted to see his son. At their interview, (which was quite unexpected to Di Salvo, for he was not even apprised that his father was in the city interceding for him,) affection predominated on both sides, over all remembrance of the past. The situation and condition of Di Salvo, his faded appearance which long illness and confinement had in part occasioned, added to which, the wounds he had received at Celano, and from which he was now scarcely recovered, had contributed ; and above all, his being closely guarded in a

melancholy and terrible prison, were circumstances that awakened all the tenderness of the father; and with the most indescribable feelings he embraced his unhappy son. All his errors were forgotten, and at that moment he felt disposed to consent to all that might restore him to happiness, could he but be restored to liberty. Di Salvo briefly related all the most essential particulars that had occurred since he left home; particularly the facts which happened at Celano, and the exact cause of the arrest, and the manner of its being served upon both himself and Amanda. That she should have escaped from the officers and be placed safe at the convent Della Martino, while himself remained a prisoner, appeared wonderful to him, and at the same time strange; as the arrest only accused him of stealing a nun from her convent; although, after his confinement in the prison, other accusations were brought forward.

After Di Salvo had related the above, the Marquis expressed his conviction that treachery had been practised towards him, that he had most certainly been betrayed into the hands of the Inquisition.

The Marquis now became thoughtful; the dying confession of the Marchioness, with all the cruelty and duplicity practised towards Amanda, rushed across his mind.

"Surely," he mentally exclaimed, "he never could be so vile as to have been the cause of her child, her only son being cast into this dismal horrid place."

He could not, however, bring his mind to believe that she had done so, or that she ever knew where he was; or her distress and anxiety to see him in her last mo-

ments was great. He felt now convinced that if she had known where he was, she would have made one effort to see him ; she would have confessed her knowledge of his terrible abode. And yet, if it was not her, who could it be.

His thoughts now turned upon the Confessor ; upon the father Raldino, and he exclaimed aloud—

“ It is, it must be him. The saintly hypocrite ; he it is who has destroyed my peace, who has, I fear, blasted my happiness for ever.”

He now turned towards Di Salvo, (who had stood gazing at him with wonder at the agitation of his manner, and surprise at the words he had uttered,) and expressed his suspicions that Raldino was the author of all his sufferings ; that he it was who had caused him to be thrown into that horrid prison.

Di Salvo now confirmed those suspicions by others equally as strong. He related the whole of the different meetings that had been held by the tribunal, and his conviction that he had not been in the hands and under the arrest from the holy Office until the guards were changed at the village of Legano ; for that during his first trial, the Inquisitor appeared greatly surprised when Di Salvo replied, and declared that he was arrested at the chapel on the lake of Celano, and not at Legano, as they had been informed ; therefore it now appeared certain that the order of the arrest had been changed when Di Salvo was delivered over to his fresh guards. Di Salvo also remembered that their accusation was his having insulted a catholic priest during an act of penance, in the church of the San Spirito ; for they did not



even mention the charge of his having stolen a nun from her convent, until he named himself, that was the accusation in the arrest read by the Benedictine Father, when the marriage ceremony was interrupted in the chapel on the lake of Celano. It was then but too evident that Raldino was the informer and the cause of his having been arrested. Di Salvo now informed the Marquis of his having been brought to trial for the murder of his brother, which act was committed some years back, and that the tribunal, finding him guilty, had passed sentence of death upon him, and that he was now awaiting the just punishment due to his crimes.

The Marquis now declared to his son, that the opinion he had always entertained of Raldino was now more than realized; he had ever considered him an hypocritical, dark designing character, and had often offended the Marchioness by expressing his doubts as to his saintly appearance. The Marquis little thought that their characters were so much alike; for though in her last moments she had confessed many of her faults, yet she had not dared to confess that her and Raldino had meditated sacrificing the life of Amanda.

The Marquis now confessed to his son, that it was the Confessor who had first given information to the Marchioness of his clandestine visits to the Villa Altiere.

"But," said he, "I never knew that he and your mother were the cause of her removal from thence, until on her dying bed she made full confession of the whole truth, and expressed her sincere sorrow and repentance



for all the grief and and anguish she had caused you both."

"On her dying bed made confession?" uttered Di Salvo, with the utmost feeling and surprise that he had not before noticed the deep sable garments of his father. "Is then my mother dead?" he again exclaimed.

"She is," answered the Marquis, mournfully, nor shall I ever forget the anguish that rent her heart during her last sad moments. The Marquis then briefly related to Di Salvo an account of her unhappy death, and the few relative circumstances attending it: he also informed him that her confession had been made to father Paulo, of the San Nicola convent, as the father Raldino was not to be found.

"But," said he, "we do not remember her ever naming him. When she became so ill, I sent to tell him to come to her, and when she was told he was not to be met with anywhere, she merely said, 'let a stranger be sent for.'"

The Marquis had been with his son now many hours it now became absolutely necessary for him to take his leave, and their feelings at parting were very acute. His father assured him that every exertion and intercession would be made for his release, and that as speedily as possible. Begging of him to be calm and composed, and to await the event with patience and resignation, he took his leave, with the hope of seeing him again in a few hours. When his father was gone, Di Salvo threw himself on a seat in the greatest agony, and gave vent to the feelings which quite oppressed him, by shedding bitter tears of sorrow and remorse at the death of his

mother, and for having occasioned her so much sorrow and uneasiness on his account.

The unreasonableness of her claims was for a time entirely forgotten, and her harsh treatment and faults were extenuated.

Happily, indeed, for the peace of Di Salvo and for the memory of his parent, her criminal designs he never understood, or heard of; and when he learned that her dying request had been intended to promote his happiness, and that almost her last prayer was for his peace and future welfare, the cruel consciousness of having interrupted her peace and happiness, of having resisted her fondest wishes, and pains for his welfare and aggrandizement,—these thoughts as they rushed across his mind in quick succession, occasioned him the most severe anguish, and he was obliged to call to mind her cruel conduct and unfeeling treatment, both of himself and his beloved Amanda, before he could become reconciled to himself. And yet he felt he could have made almost any sacrifice, could he but have been permitted to have seen her once again, to have received her forgiveness for all the anxiety and uneasiness he had occasioned her, to have received her parting, dying blessing and forgiveness.

To dissipate these sad, these gloomy, distressing reflections, he arose from his seat and paced his dreary prison with feelings indescribable; then recollecting the last kind injunctions of his beloved father, he sat down again to endeavour to obey them, and to exert his little remaining fortitude to await with patience the

period which hope whispered was not far distant, for his release from his loathsome, horrid dungeon.

His confinement was now becoming quite insupportable, and he felt, that if he was not soon released from those dismal walls, and set at liberty again, he should sink under the pressure of his heavy afflictions. His exertions were not unavailing, for in a short time he regained sufficient composure to partake of the refreshment his guard had brought. After his repast he sat pensively reviewing the past, and with the anchor of hope to rest on, he calmly looked forward to the future. He thought of his beloved Amanda with feelings of unabated affection, and her image presented itself to his view, arranged in the lovely garb of simplicity and truth; and fondly did he indulge the pleasing ideas that he should have the supreme happiness of again beholding her, and that ere long they should meet again, never more to be separated by the cruel hand of tyranny and injustice.

At length, tired and languid he laid himself on his lowly bed, and with feelings of more calmness and composure than he had ever hoped to have enjoyed again, he sought that repose his weary spirits so much stood in need of; we will leave him to enjoy this calm, this necessary refreshment.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

And his motionless lips lay still as death,  
And his words came forth without his breath ;  
Though his eyes shone out yet the lids were fix'd,  
And the glance that it gave was wild and unmix'd ;  
So seen by the dying lamp's fitful light,  
Lifeless, but life-like, and awful to sight.

For nearly three weeks after the arrival of the Marquis di Salvo, at Rome, no decisive or satisfactory answer was returned to the repeated and numerous applications made for the liberation of his son, from the awful prison of the Inquisition, when one morning soon after sun rise, both the Marquis and his son received a summons at the same time, to attend the father Raldino in his dismal cell.

To meet the man who had occasioned so much distress, pain, and suffering to his family, was extremely repugnant to the feelings, and painful to the mind of the Marquis di Salvo; and he would have refused to attend the summons had it been possible: but when it was represented to him that his refusal might prove of the most serious consequences to his son, he waved all sense of feeling for himself, and consented to attend at the

appointed hour. It was generally conjectured by the guards that the Confessor had some awful and important secret to disclose. He had for the last two days raved incessantly about his daughter and the young lord Di Salvo, and although the Grand Penitentiary had himself visited him in hopes that he would unburthen his mind to him, yet he would not consent to make the smallest confession of the load that hung upon and embettered every moment of his existence, until the arrival, and at the hour he had appointed to see the Marquis Di Salvo and his unhappy son. Therefore, as the time drew nigh, the Marquis called at the door of Di Salvo, when led by two officers, they proceeded to the gloomy cell of the father Raldino. The Marquis shuddered with horror as he passed through the dismal passages that led to the Confessor's dungeon; and the most agonizing sensation thrilled through his whole frame, as he listened to the heart-rending shrieks and groans of the unfortunate victims suffering under the different tortures inflicted by their vile oppressors in that horrid place. While they stood waiting for the numerous bars and locks to be unfastened, the agitation which Di Salvo had suffered on receiving the summons to attend the Confessor, returned with redoubled force now that he was going to behold once more, and no doubt for the last time, the wretched man whom he felt convinced was the author of all his sufferings and misfortunes, and who had declared himself to be the father of the object of his affections, the parent of Amanda Lusnette.

The Marquis on entering the dungeon, suffered emotions of a very different nature, and with the reluctance

he felt to see the father Raldino, was mingled a degree of curiosity as to the purport of the event which had occasioned this summons to attend him. The heavy doors being thrown open, presented to their view a gloomy looking dismal apartment, lighted only by the distant grating. On entering, they discovered Raldino lying on a miserable mattress in one corner of the room. He did not rise to receive them on their entrance, but as he lifted up his head and bowed it in obeisance, he waved his hand for them to take their stations near him. The light which was but faintly admitted through the grating, shone upon his shrunk features, and he appeared as if death had already struck the fatal blow. His eyes were hollow and deep sunk in his head, and he looked more than usually ghastly. Di Salvo, as he gazed upon him, groaned heavily and averted his face, but soon recovering a sufficient command of himself from the shock such a wretched object was well calculated to produce, he approached the mattress.

The Marquis Di Salvo on witnessing the deplorable condition of the father Raldino, suppressed every feeling and expression of resentment towards an enemy so reduced, so fallen; and on recovering from the shock such a miserable, coward, death-like being was calculated to impart to his before agitated feelings, he approached the bed, and enquired what he had to communicate—for what purpose had he summoned them to that awful place.

The father Raldino, without attending to the question of the Marquis, raised himself a little and looked curiously round the room, then beckoned one of the Officers,

who approaching the bed, he demanded of him to attend.

“Where is father Paulo?” said he after a short pause, “I do not see him here. Is he gone so soon, and without having waited to hear the purport of my summons? Let him be called in again immediately. I require, I insist upon his attendance at this solemn hour. He shall feel—”

Here the Confessor seemed faint from this little exertion, and fell back again on his pillow. After a short rest he seemed to recover, and gazing wildly round the apartment; then fixing his eyes on the Officer, he said—

“Who are these that surround me? who is he that stands at the foot of my bed?”

As he spake he gazed wildly on the figure of Di Salvo, who rested in deep dejection against one of the pillars; and lost in thought till aroused by the hollow voice of the father Raldino. He now stepped forward, and exclaimed—

“It is I; Rosano di Salvo of Naples; I have obeyed your requisition, and now request to know the purport of it.”

The Marquis also demanded an explanation of their being summoned to that dismal place.

Raldino now appeared to meditate. Sometimes he fixed his eyes in deep dejection on Di Salvo for an instant, and when he withdrew them, he seemed struggling with some inward pang, and would then sink into still deeper thoughtfulness. At length as he raised himself again, there appeared a singular expression of wild-



ness in his eyes ; and a sudden glare shot from them as he said—

“Who is it that glides there in the dusk of the apartment ?”

Di Salvo turning to look who it was, perceived Pietro the Monk, passing behind him.’

“I am here,” said the Monk ; “what do you require of me ?”

“That you will bear testimony to the truth of what I shall now declare,” replied the Confessor in an awful stern voice.

Pietro bowed in acquiescence, and then took his station by the side of an Inquisitor who had entered the room with him: they stood on one side of the bed, and the Marquis on the other: Di Salvo remaining at the foot.

The Confessor now raised himself in his bed, and with a firm hollow voice said—

“The first part of what I have to make known to you relates to the slanderous cabal formerly carried on by him, the father Pietro di Bracio, and myself, against the peace and happiness of an innocent young lady, whom at my instigation he has basely traduced.”

At these words the Monk would have interrupted the Confessor, but Di Salvo forbade him.

Raldino now addressing the Marquis, said:—

“Amanda, *lui netto*—known to you my lord.”

Di Salvo now very much agitated, looked at his father and remained silent.

“I have heard of her,” said the Marquis, “and she is

very young and beautiful—she is now at a convent

a loud hollow voice. "Raise your eyes, my lord, and say, do you not recollect that face?" pointing to the Monk Pietro.

"I have seen that face more than once," said the Marquis, now regarding him attentively; "it is a face not easily forgotten. I well remember too the day on which you introduced him to me at my palace at Naples.

"Ah, that day," said Raldino. "I did indeed introduce him to you."

"But what of him," said the Marquis, hastily.

"Why do you now accuse him of falsehood and wrong, since you acknowledge yourself to have been the instigator of his conduct."

Raldino was silent; but his eyes were fixed stedfastly on the Monk, who also seemed to be regarding him very earnestly.

"Gracious heavens!" exclaimed Di Salvo, this father Pietro is, as I have always suspected, the calumniator, the slanderer of Amanda Lusinette."

"It is most true, replied the Confessor, and I have summoned you for the purpose of vindicating—"

"Your daughter!" interrupted Di Salvo, "you who but lately declared yourself to be her father, now also acknowledge yourself to be the author of those infamous slanders. Oh what villainy—!" said Di Salvo.

Then instantly recollecting himself, he became sensible of his indiscretion, for he had particularly avoided informing his father that Raldino had declared Amanda Lusinette to be his daughter. He now with feelings the most painful perceived that this abrupt disclosure

and at such a moment, might prove fatal to his hopes, and that the Marquis would not consider the promise he had given, however solemn, as binding under circumstances so peculiar and unforeseen as the present. The astonishment of the Marquis at this discovery cannot be easily imagined, much less described. He looked at his son as if for an explanation of what he had now heard, and then at the Confessor with increased detestation and horror.

“Your daughter?” he exclaimed indignantly; “and was it for this purpose I was summoned here?”

And he was moving towards the door for the purpose of leaving the apartment, when the voice of his son, as also that of Raldino, arrested his steps. Di Salvo entreated his father to suspend his conjectures for the present, and await an explanation of what he had heard, till he could converse with him alone, for he had his doubts as to the truth of what had been asserted.

The Marquis waving his hand in silence, desisted for the present making further enquiry; but it was too evident by his manner, that his opinion as well as his resolution respecting the marriage of Di Salvo with Amanda, (should he regain his liberty,) was already formed.

“You confess, then, that you are the author of those slanderous reports,” repeated Di Salvo.

“Hear me,” cried Raldino, in a feeble, hollow voice, “hear me.”

And raising himself a little, he paused, unable to recover immediately from the exertion he had made. At length he said—

“I have declared and still continue that declaration, that Amanda LusINETTE, as she has been named for the purpose I have no doubt, of concealing her from an unworthy parent, is my daughter.”

Di Salvo groaned deeply at this avowal, but made no reply.

The Marquis, however, was not quite so passive.

“And was it for the purpose, I again repeat, that I was summoned to this awful place, only to listen to a vindication of your daughter’s character? But let this Signora Amanda, be who she may,” (suppressing his indignation,) “of what importance is it to me whether she is innocent or guilty?”

Di Salvo forbore to express his feelings farther than to say—

“Then let me die within these dreary walls, since it is of no importance to you whether I am happy or miserable;”

Then covering his face with his hands, he remained silent.

The words and manner of the Marquis seemed to recall all the spirit of Raldino.

“She is the daughter of a noble house,” said he haughtily.

And endeavouring to raise himself up from his mattress, he exclaimed aloud—

“In me you behold the Count di Barretto.

The Marquis looked at him contemptuously but remained silent.

Raldino then said in a hollow but imperative tone of voice—

"I now call upon you, Pietro di Bracio, who have declared yourself on a late occasion so strenuous for justice ; I call upon you now to do justice in this instance, and to acknowledge before these witnesses, that Amanda Lusnette is innocent of every charge of misconduct which you have formerly related to the Marquis di Salvo to her disadvantage."

The Monk only smiled contemptuously.

"Do you hesitate to retract the cruel slanders you have cast upon the name and character of that innocent and helpless female ; and which has been the means of destroying her peace of mind and happiness for ever," exclaimed Di Salvo. "Villain, I say, do you persist?"

The Marquis now interrupted his son by saying—

Let me put an end to this difficulty by concluding this interview, I perceive that my presence has been required for a purpose that does not concern me."

Before Raldino could reply, the Marquis had nearly quitted the room. But the voice of Di Salvo now urged his return, for although the Confessor had named the subject concerning his child first, as that lay nearest his heart, yet that was not all that had urged him to request this interview.

If you consent, I again repeat, to listen to the vindication of my child's innocence, you shall afterwards find, Signor, that I, fallen though I am, I have still been desirous of counteracting as far as remains for me to do, the evil I have occasioned, and that I yet have the power and inclination to make restitution to the utmost, and you shall then acknowledge that what I then make known is of the utmost consequence to the repose

and peace of mind of the Marquis di Salvo, high in influence, and haughty in prosperity as he now appears."

The latter part of this speech had very nearly caused the Marquis to have quitted the room again. His pride began to swell high, and he took some long steps towards the door again, but conjecturing that the subject to which the Confessor alluded, might concern and perhaps materially assist the liberation of his son, he paused, and returning to the bed side, consented to attend to what the monk Pietro di Bracio should disclose.

During this interruption the monk had been considering whether he had better remain silent, or acknowledge himself the slanderer of Amanda Lusinette, and it was only the resolute manner of di Salvo, who appeared to have no doubt as to his guilt, that made him apprehend the consequence of persisting in a falsehood, it was not either remorse of conscience or the appeal of the father Raldino.

He then after a considerable pause, entered into a long and circumstantial detail of the villany that had been practised to ruin the happiness of Di Salvo and Amanda; during which he contrived to throw all the odium of the original designs upon the father Raldino, and most solemnly declared upon oath, that he had been prevailed upon by his vile arts, to impose upon the credulity of the Marquis di Salvo, in making him believe that the character and conduct of Amanda Lusinette was such, that Rosano di Salvo's connexions with her, would entail everlasting disgrace upon his family.

This avowal having been made upon the most solemn oath, the father Raldino, by the questions he put to the Monk, was particularly careful, the account should be so full and circumstantial, that even the most prejudiced hearer must have been firmly convicted of its truth.

The effect of this confession upon the minds of the present auditors, was various ; the Marquis had listened to the whole with an unmoved countenance, but with the most earnest attention.

Di Salvo had remained in a fixed attitude, with his arms folded, and his eyes bent full on the monk in such eager and stern regard, as seemed to search into his very soul ; and when he had concluded his attestation of the innocence of her his soul held most dear, a smile of triumphant joy lighted up his features, as he looked at the Marquis, and begged an acknowledgement of his conviction, that Amanda Lusnette had been most basely calumniated.

The cold glance of his father, however, struck to the heart of Di Salvo, who felt shocked at the indifference he evinced, although he could not reject the truth of what he had now heard asserted, upon the most solemn oath.

The father Raldino now appeared to be suffering both in mind and body, from the great exertion he had made to vindicate the character, and prove the innocence of his child. When the subject was finished, he sunk back on his pillow and closed his eyes, a hue so pallid, succeeded by one so livid, overspread his features, that Di Salvo for an instant believed he was either



dead or dying. And he was not the only one who had thought so, for one of the officers stepping up to the bed side, endeavoured to administer some assistance to relieve, and if possible, to recover and revive him; his efforts had the desired effect, for he unclosed his eyes after a short period, and seemed both to recollect what had passed, and to know every one present.

The Marquis now seeing him recovered a little, without reverting to what had just been said, requested to know what further he had to communicate, and which he had asserted to be intimately connected with his peace.

The Confessor again endeavoured to raise himself in his bed, and enquired whether there was a secretary of the Inquisition in the room, whom he had requested might attend, to take a formal deposition of what he should say, if permitted.—

He was answered in the affirmative.

He then asked what other persons were in the room, adding, that he should require one Inquisitor to be present.

He was now informed there was one Inquisitor, and the two officers, which was quite sufficient evidence for his purpose.

The Confessor now called for a lamp, and the light discovered to Raldino the various figures assembled in his cell. And the same light also discovered to them the ghastly visage of the Confessor, and Di Salvo again thought that death had seized him, and that he would not be permitted to make much further confession.

Every eye was now fixed upon him in anxious expect-

tation of what he should disclose, but for some time he remained reclining on his pillow, with his eyes shut, while the movement of his lips, and the changes of his countenance, indicated the strong emotions and working of his mind. At length he opened his eyes, and looking wildly round the apartment, he made a violent effort to raise himself up in his bed. Having with the greatest difficulty succeeded, he motioned to the secretary to note down what he should disclose. He then with a few interruptions made a full and ample confession of all the arts and villany he had practised against Rosono di Salvo solemnly declaring himself to be the anonymous accuser, who had caused him to be arrested by the Holy Office, and that *heresy* which he had brought against him, was false and malicious.

At this confirmation of his suspicions, Di Salvo now demanded an explanation of the arrest served upon him and Amanda, at the chapel on the Lake of Celano, and also requested to know if she had been brought to Rome, and confined within the same dismal walls as himself?

The Confessor replied, "that they were not officers, but persons employed by himself, to separate him and Amanda, and that the arrest had also been forged by himself for the purpose of empowering the ruffians to carry off the lady Amanda without opposition from the inhabitants of the convent, in which she had taken refuge."

Di Salvo here interrupted the Confessor, by asking, "what occasion there was for stratagem since, had he

claimed her as his daughter, there would have been no difficulty or opposition to his demand."

Raldino replied, "that he was then ignorant of the relationship that existed between them. But with regard to the enquiries made as to the manner in which he had discovered her to be his daughter;" he remained totally silent; and sunk back on his pillow exhausted from the exertion he had made, and quite overwhelmed with the painful recollections these questions awakened, in his deeply oppressed, and agitated mind; and it was some time ere he recovered sufficiently to proceed.



## CHAPTER XXX.

Oh! this burning brain!  
Soon the cold hand of death will bring me peace,  
And free me from thy fierce tyrannic power.

The Marquis and his son now felt extremely anxious for the recovery of the Confessor, and the guard having administered a cordial, he seemed to revive slowly from the slight swoon into which he had fallen.

The depositions taken down by the secretary, were now formally signed by the Inquisitor and the officers present, and Di Salvo then saw his innocence clearly proved, by the very man who had, by his vile arts, thrown him among the perils of the awful Inquisition. But the near prospect of release now before him, from that dread abode of terror and death, failed to have its desired effect on the mind and spirits of Di Salvo, while he recollected that Amanda was the daughter of the man who now lay stretched on the miserable bed before him, who had been solemnly declared and proved a murderer; and whom he himself had been in some degree instrumental in bringing to a dreadful and ignominious death. Still willing to hope that Raldino had not spoken the truth concerning his relationship to Amanda.

Di Salvo now claimed from the Confessor, (in consideration of the pure affection he had so long cherished for her,) a full and convincing explanation of the circumstances, connected with the discovery of her relationship to him.

At this public avowal of his attachment to her, a haughty, angry look appeared on the countenance of the Marquis, who forbade him to make any further enquiry on the subject. He then moved towards the door, saying, —

“My presence is now no longer necessary; the prisoner has concluded the only part of his confession which I can be interested to hear from him; and in consideration of the honest confession he has made, relative to proving the innocence of my beloved son;

I most willingly pardon, and forgive him the pain and suffering his villany has caused me and my family." Then recollecting himself, he turned to the secretary, saying, "the paper containing his confession, is to be given to you, holy father; (addressing the Inquisitor,) and you are requested to lay it upon the table of the Holy Office, as soon as possible, that the innocence of Rosano di Salvo of Naples, may appear as fully substantiated by it, and that he may be released from these prison walls without delay. But first I demand a full copy of those declarations, and that it also be signed by the witnesses now present."

As the Marquis had now fully made up his mind not to leave the room without the copy, he took a seat near the grating, and the secretary immediately commenced preparing one for him.

Meanwhile Di Salvo remained near the bed, and was urging his claim for an explanation, and some particulars respecting the family of Amanda.

The father Raldino now no longer permitted to evade the enquiry, could not give a circumstantial account, without implicating the Marchioness di Salvo, his mother, (of whose death he was still ignorant,) in the fatal designs which had been meditated against the life of Amanda; he therefore briefly related little more than that a portrait which had been given her by her aunt, as being that of her father, had first led to the discovery of her family, and who she really was.

Di Salvo now enquired how, and when, and where he had seen the portrait; but the Confessor waved the enquiry and remained silent.

While the Confessor had been giving this brief account, the monk Pietro, who was still stationed near the bed, a little distance from the rest, stood intently gazing at Raldino, with the malignity of a demon depicted on his countenance. His dark terrific features just appearing under the edge of his cowl, received the full glare of the lamp, and displayed the triumphant and malignant feelings that pervaded his mind.

Di Salvo, as his eye glanced upon him, again beheld the very monk he had seen so oft at at Palazzi, and he thought he saw a man capable of committing crimes equally as atrocious as these he had accused Raldino of perpetrating. He now called to mind the bloody garment he and his servant Bardo had discovered in the vaulted chamber of the ruined fortress; the awful prediction he had also given of the Signora Marietta's death, rushed across his memory, and his suspicions being thus revived, he determined to obtain if possible, either a relief from or a confirmation of them, and for this purpose he now solemnly called upon the father Raldino, who already condemned to die, had no longer anything to fear from a disclosure of the truth, whatever it might be, to confess all that he knew on the subject.

As he did so, he turned to look at the Monk, to observe the effect this demand would have upon him; but his face was so closely shrowded with his cowl, that little of its expression could be seen, and Di Salvo remarked, that while he was speaking, the Monk had drawn his garment more closely over his face, and that he had instantly turned his eyes full on the Confessor.

With the most solemn protestations Raldino now declared his ignorance of the Signora Marietta's death.

Di Salvo then demanded by what means his agent Pietro di Bracio had obtained such immediate information or foreknowledge, as the warnings he had given at Paluzzi indicated, or at least proved him to have of the event, as he could be so little interested, and why that warning was given.

The Monk did not attempt to anticipate the reply of Raldino, who after a momentary silence, said,—

“That warning, young man, was given to deter you from visiting Altiere, as was every other warning or circumstantial advice, given you beneath the arch of Paluzzi, or elsewhere.”

“Father,” replied Di Salvo, “you have certainly never loved, yourself, or you would have spared yourself the practice of artifices so ineffectual to mislead, or conquer a lover. Did you then think I was to be frightened, or that an anonymous adviser could have more influence with me than my affliction?—the plan you choose, was the very one most likely to fail.”

“I believe,” replied the Confessor, “that the advice of a stranger might have some weight with you, but I trusted more to the impression of awe, which the conduct and foreknowledge of the stranger might have upon a mind like yours, so very susceptible and weak, and which renders you especially liable to superstition.”

“What! does a Monk call superstition a weakness,” asked Di Salvo. “But grant he does, on what occasion have I betrayed such weakness?”



"Have you forgot a long conversation I once held with you on invisible spirits," said Raldino.

"I have not forgot the conversation which you allude to," replied Di Salvo, "and I do not recollect that I then disclosed any opinion that may justify your assertions."

"The opinions you then avowed were quite rational," replied the Confessor, "but the ardour of your imagination was too apparent, and what ardent mind ever was contented to trust to plain reasoning, or to the evidence of the senses? It may not willingly confine itself to the dull truths of this earth, but eager to expand its faculties, to fill its capacity, and to experience its own peculiar delights, soars after new wonders into a world of its own."

Di Salvo blushed at this reproof, now conscious of its justness, and was surprised that Raldino should so well understand the nature of his mind, while he himself had been ignorant even of its propensities.

"I acknowledge the truth of your remark," said he, "as far as concerns myself. I have, however, inquiries to make on a point less abstracted, and towards explaining which, the evidence of my senses themselves have done little. To whom, let me ask you, belonged the bloody garments I found lying in the vaulted chamber at Paluzzi, and what became of the unfortunate person to whom they belonged?"

The greatest consternation was now wildly depicted in the countenance of Raldino, as he exclaimed

"What garments?"

"They appeared to be those of a person who had died

by violence," and they were discovered in a place much frequented by your avowed agent, Pietro di Braccio."

As he finished the sentence, Di Salvo looked stedfastly at the Monk, upon whom the attention of all present was now directed.

"They were my own garments," said the Monk, carelessly.

"Your own, and in that condition," exclaimed Di Salvo, "I affirm they were covered with gore!"

"I again repeat they were my own, and for the condition you found them in, I have to thank you,—the wound your pistol shot gave me, occasioned their being covered with blood."

Di Salvo then solemnly denied ever having had any pistol, and considered this as a base subterfuge, for said he,—

"My sword was my only weapon, and I never could get near enough to wound you, or you most certainly would have felt the point of it."

"Pause a moment," said the Monk, indignantly.

"I repeat that I had no fire-arms," replied Di Salvo, angrily.

"I appeal to the father Raldino," rejoined Pietro, "whether I was not wounded by a pistol shot."

"To me you have no longer any right to appeal," said Raldino. "Why should I save you from suspicion that may bring you to a state like this, to which you have reduced me."

"Your crimes have brought you to it," replied the Monk, "I have only done my duty, and that which

another person could have accomplished without my aid.—The priest to whom Thomo made his last confession, therefore I again repeat I have only done my duty.”

“It is however, a duty of such a kind,” observed Di Salvo, “as I would not willingly have upon my conscience. You have betrayed and sacrificed the life of your former, most intimate friend and companion, and have compelled me to assist in the condemnation, and destruction of a fellow being!”

“You, like me, have assisted to destroy, a destroyer,” replied the Monk, “he has taken life, and most certainly deserves to lose it. If, however, it will afford you consolation to know that you have not materially assisted, I will hereafter give you proof for this assurance. There were other means of proving that the father Raldino and the Count di Baretto were one and the same person, without the testimony of the father Anselmo, although I was ignorant of them when I requested you to summon the Penitentiary.”

“If you had sooner made known thus much to me,” said Di Salvo, “I might have believed and given credit to what you now say; the assertion would then have appeared more plausible. Now I can only understand that it is designed to win my silence, and prevent my reporting upon you your own maxim, namely, that he who has taken the life of another, most certainly deserves to lose his own. I now again demand, to whom do these bloody garments belong, which I discovered in the bloody chamber in the ruins of Paluzzo?”

"To myself, I again most solemnly declare," said the Monk.

"Impossible," said Di Salvo, "I was armed only with my sword."

"You had a companion," observed the Monk, "had he not fire-arms?"

Di Salvo after a momentary pause, remembered that Bardo had pistols, and that he did fire one beneath the ruined arch, in the first alarm, occasioned by the prophetic words and awful voice of the Monk. He instantly acknowledged the recollection, but said—

"I heard no groan, no symptom of distress occasioned by my servant having fired his pistol; besides the stained garments I speak of, were a considerable distance from the spot where the pistol was fired; and I cannot credit that a person so severely wounded as those garments indicated, could have silently withdrawn to such a remote distance, or having done so, he would not have left his dress there."

"All that is nevertheless true," replied Pietro. "I stifled the anguish I felt from the wounds, and precipitately retired to the interior of the building to escape from my pursuers; but you followed me even to the dungeon where I threw off my discolored vestments, in which I dared not return to my convent, and escaped through a concealed door in one corner of the chamber, just as you entered. The party who accompanied me for the purpose of confining you and your servant until morning, (should an opportunity offer) procured me another dress, and I departed from the ruins the next morning, by a way which all your ingenuity could never

discover. It was the very night on which Signora Amanda was taken from the Villa Altieri. I think I was not entirely unheard by you during the night, for my groans reached you from an adjoining chamber, and my companions were much entertained with the alarm which your servant testified. Are you now convinced?"

All this, with many other circumstances related by Pietro, confirmed its veracity. Pietro also declared his innocence with regard to the Signora Marietta's death; he knew it only from one of his companions.

Di Salvo now enquired of Pietro, "if the guard did admit him on the night he visited him in his cell?"

"Do you believe that I, a servant of the Most Holy Inquisition, will betray any of its secrets?"

Di Salvo still urged the enquiry.

"They were honest," replied Pietro, "seek no further, but be satisfied with the knowledge which experience has given you of the Inquisition."

"It has terrible secrets," said Raldino, who had long been silent, "know, young man, that every cell of every prisoner has a concealed entrance, by which the ministers of death may pass unnoticed to their victims. This Pietro is now one of those dreadful summoners, and is acquainted with all the secret avenues that lead to murder."

Di Salvo now regarded him with horror, and Raldino paused. Pietro also was silent; but his eyes were fixed in vengeance on Raldino.

"His office has been short," resumed the Confessor, turning his heavy, sunken eyes upon Pietro, "and his task is almost done."

As he pronounced the last words, his voice faltered; but they were heard by the Monk, who, drawing nearer the bed, demanded an explanation of them. A ghastly smile triumphed in the features of Raldino; "Fear not, but that an explanation will come full soon," said he.

Pietro now fixed his eyes full on the Confessor, as if he would have searched into his very soul. When Di Salvo looked at Raldino again, he was shocked to observe the sudden alteration that had taken place in his countenance; yet still a faint smile triumphed there; and while he still gazed at him, his whole frame became convulsed, and it was evident to all in the apartment that he was now dying. The horror of Di Salvo and his father, and, indeed, of every one present, was great; and all seemed, at least, to feel a momentary compassion, except Pietro, who stood beside the bed on which the Confessor lay, and looked steadfastly at him, while a smile of derision marked every feature, and, unmoved, he viewed the pangs he suffered.

The Monk now turned from the sad spectacle before him; and as Di Salvo looked at him, a slight spasm darted across his face, and suddenly his muscles seemed to become contracted,—he involuntarily caught at the arm of the person that stood near him, and leaned on his shoulder for support. He was not long permitted to triumph in the sufferings of his enemy, without partaking, at least, of their horror himself.

Raldino's struggles now abated a little, and, presently, a faint gleam of recollection returning, he moved his lips as if he would have spoken: at length, by repeated efforts, he succeeded, and the word "Pietro" was distinctly heard. He rolled his eyes round the chamber, and, as they rested

on the Monk—who was now regarding him again, he pointed towards him. The Monk now became transfixed to the spot: and, unable to withdraw his eyes from the glare of Raldino's, he read in their expression the dreadful sentence of his fate;—the triumph of revenge and cunning. Struck with some terrible conviction, a pallid hue overspread his face, at the same time an involuntary motion convulsed his features: cold trembling seized his frame, when, uttering a deep groan, he fell back into the arms of those that were near him. At the instant of his fall, Raldino uttered such an exulting, horrible sound, and it appeared so unlike anything human, that every one was horror-struck; and they would have left the apartment, but the door was fastened. Raldino was not permitted to repeat the dreadful sound; he was again seized with strong convulsions, and when the physician, who had been sent for, arrived, the moment he beheld Raldino, he discovered him to be poisoned. He also pronounced a similar opinion on the Monk Pietro, and affirmed that the drug, as appeared from the violence of the effect, was of too subtle a nature to allow of antidotes. He was, however, willing to administer the medicine used in such cases. While he was explaining to an attendant, the convulsions with which Raldino had been seized again elected, but the Monk Pietro appeared far the last extremity. His sufferings were now incessant: his eyes started, even for a moment, returned, and the expiring groan the medicine, which had been sent for, could be brought. When it came, it was administered to the father Raldino with some little success, so he raised his voice still faintly to call to the Monk Pietro. "Dost thou still live?" said he, and then silence



seemed to revive him more. The Inquisitor, perceiving that his senses were perfect, asked him, "if he knew the cause of Pietro's death?"

"By poison," said he; "I have no wish to conceal the truth, nor the satisfaction"—

Here he was obliged to pause; but, presently, he added, "I have destroyed him who would have destroyed me:—and I have escaped an ignominious death. The proof of what I now assert you will find concealed in a particular part of my vest. It is the poison in which I dip my poniard, the better to defend me. The Secretary was ordered to note down the Confessor's words.

"Who was your accomplice?" was then demanded, as the Inquisitor was anxious to discover who had assisted to administer the drug to Pietro; but Raldino was now no longer in a condition to reply. Life was sinking apace: the gleam of spirit and of character that had returned to his eye, was departed: he laid his hand on his heart, as much as to say, "it was me, I had no accomplice;" and very soon after, a livid corpse was all that remained of the once terrible father Raldino.

The consternation of the Marquis, and of Di Salvo, compelled to witness this scene of horror, cannot be easily imagined: the former had retired to the distant grate of the dungeon, and now that the worst was over, and the several witnesses had signed the last avowal and confession of the father Raldino, they were permitted to depart from this awful scene. The officers re-conducted them again to the chamber occupied by Di Salvo. The guard having brought some little refreshment, the Marquis and his son slightly partook of it; then, taking leave of his son, the

Marquis left the prison, and Di Salvo remained in his cell till the decision of the Holy Office had passed, respecting his innocence, as solemnly confirmed by the dying confession of the father Raldino.



## CHAPTER XXXI.

Ah, why should hopes and fears engross the mind  
To passing, subsidiary joys confined ?  
Though every hour an awful warning gives,  
And the cruel vapours its tenants to receive,  
Still shall this idle dream of life be o'er ;  
Soon shall we land on our mortal shore  
A distant, beyond this little spot of clay  
To our vast regions of eternal day.

Immediately after the funeral of the Count di Montaldeo his servant Marco returned to Italy with letters from the Count di Gracio, acquainting his daughter, the Lady Victoriana, with an account of his sudden death. It seems the Count had felt a presentiment during the voyage that he should not long survive his unfortunate child, and therefore had confided the whole of his affairs to the confidence and management of the Count di Gracio.

On the arrival of Marco at the Villa Tivoli, the beautiful residence of the young Count di Carantani and the Lady Victoriana, he found the whole house plunged into the deepest consternation and grief. The Duke of Milan, having pursued his rival, sent him a challenge, which was accepted; and the young Count and the Duke having met, the Duke's aim proved fatal, for the ball entered the heart of Carantani, and he fell upon the spot.

When Marco arrived at the Villa, the remains of the Count were just brought home; and it was not until after his funeral, that he ventured to deliver to the Lady Victoriana the packet he had brought from the Count di Gracio to announce the death of the Count di Montaldo, her father.

Such a succession of misfortunes, and death in her family, had nearly proved too much for the delicate frame of the Lady Victoriana Carantani, and she had almost sunk under such an accumulation of grief; she was now left a widow with one child, a daughter, whom she had named after her unfortunate departed aunt, Celestina Edna.

When time, the mitigator of every sorrow and misfortune, had soothed the mind of the Lady Carantani to some degree of calmness and composure, she again perused the letters which Marco had brought from Naples; she then learnt that her father had bequeathed the whole of his extensive property (subject to a certain portion for her own private use during her life) to her only child, the infant Celestina; that he had appointed the Count di Gracio and her maternal uncle, the Count di Camira, as sole guardians of the property. The packet also contained letters of pressing invitation, both from

her uncle and the Count di Gracio, as also from the Marquis Durazzo, for her to visit Naples early in the following spring. There was also a letter from her aunt, the Countess di Camira, entreating her to visit them, and to bring the little Celestina with her: the Lady Janetta Durazzo had also enclosed a most sympathising affectionate letter, hoping she would comply with the wishes of her friends, by paying them a visit.

The Lady Victoriana thought it prudent to send for the agent, whom her father had appointed to superintend and take care of his affairs until the funeral of his child was over, and he should be able to make a final arrangement of his property; and she now informed him of his sudden death, and that proper guardians had been appointed. After having settled this part of her affairs, she felt a strong inclination to see, once more, the abode of her infancy—therefore prepared to visit the Villa di Montaldo.

On her arrival, she was received by the Duchess of Castellanore with every mark of politeness and attention, and who feelingly and tenderly sympathised with her in the late trials she had met with. A few hours' acquaintance was sufficient to link them together in the bonds of mutual friendship and esteem. In discoursing of past events, and of her intended journey to Naples in the ensuing spring, she named the kind, affectionate letters she had received from her aunt and the Lady Janetta Durazzo. At the mention of her earliest friend and companion, the Duchess expressed all the pleasure she felt, and informed the Lady Victoriana that the Lady Janetta Durazzo, whom she had now spoken of, was her most intimate friend and youthful acquaintance; that she would have been a companion in

their journey to Italy, had not the late melancholy event, which had deprived her of an amiable and beloved brother, prevented her accompanying them to that delightful country.

During this interview, the Duchess was so fascinated with the lovely Lady Carantani that, at her earnest entreaty and persuasion, she consented to pass a few weeks with her, prior to her leaving Italy for Naples.

When she took her leave, they parted with a mutual attachment subsisting between them. The Duke felt pleased she had met with so desirable a friend and acquaintance, as the Duchess had but a dull companion in himself, from the ill state of his health, which was still very precarious, and had been benefitted but little from the change of climate; and he doubted not but the pleasing, fascinating manners of the Lady Carantani, whom grief and misfortune had rendered still more interesting, would add greatly to their little society.

Previous to the Lady Victoriana paying her promised visit to the Duchess of Castelamore, she visited the beautiful Lake of Averno, on whose delightful banks was situated the residence of the good old Marquis di Carantani, her father-in-law. The Marchioness had been dead some years, and grief for the loss of his beloved and only child, the husband of the Lady Victoriana, had preyed upon the mind of the Marquis to such a degree, that he was become almost melancholy and superannuated. He avoided all society but that of his two nephews, the young Marquis di Dalmira, and the Count, his younger brother, who would frequently visit him, and in whose society he seemed a little relieved from the gloom which pervaded his mind.





The Marquis Carantini interrupted at his favorite  
tree by the young Marchese di Dalminco and his Brother.



The arrival of his daughter-in-law, the Lady Victoriana, at the Villa, seemed to rouse him from his lethargy, and he would sit and talk with her for hours, or would walk with her through the enchanting vineyards and beautiful plantations that nearly encompassed this delightful residence. At another time he would ramble alone into the pleasure grounds, and, seating himself beneath an old shady tree, which had been his favourite resort with the Marchioness and his son, he would sit and amuse himself with a book, or brood in melancholy until a late hour, if not disturbed. During her visit, the Lady Carantani had frequently followed him to this favourite retreat, and endeavoured to dissipate the gloom which oppressed him by admiring the beauties of the surrounding scene; and, in expatiating upon the grandeur and sublimity which everywhere met their view, their thoughts had been

“Raised from Nature up to Nature’s God,”

and tranquillity had happily succeeded to gloomy despair.

It was beneath this favourite tree that the Marquis de Dalmira and his brother interrupted him in his studies to acquaint him with the death of his beloved son, occasioned by the unfortunate pistol shot of the Duke of Milan.

One day that the Lady Victoriana had accompanied the Marquis to this retreat, she said, “I am not surprised at your choosing this for your favourite resort; it is a lovely spot.”

“It is,” replied the Marquis mournfully.

When, after a short pause, and heaving a deep drawn sigh, he again continued. “It is now about four months ago, I came and sat alone just where I do now. All na-

ture wore as fair an aspect; the birds were singing, and at intervals the coo of the turtle dove made a sweet contrast. I heard the bleating of the sheep and lambs near me, and the little rill below murmured among the white pebbles; it was fuller than usual, and the water was clear as glass, giving a delightful coolness to the surrounding air, and forming a beautiful object for the eye and ear to rest upon. And the church yonder reminded me of the transitory nature of all sublunary joys; for there, under the sacred green turf, lie the rich and the poor, and there ‘the wicked cease from troubling,’ and there ‘the weary are at rest.’

“I felt a melancholy in all these; a restless impatience pervaded my mind. I listened for a footstep, which I could not hear; my eyes rested on my book, which I had taken from my pocket with the intention of perusing it, but it failed to amuse. Again I listened, and my eyes sought him they could not find—canst thou guess who it was that I looked for?”

A long pause ensued, when he again continued—“At length I was interrupted in my contemplations by seeing my nephews, the Marquis de Dalmira and his brother, advancing towards me. Their step was slow, and their serious look seemed to indicate unpleasant tidings. On their approach, the usual salutations having passed, they cautiously informed me of the death of my son—you know the rest.”

The Lady Victoriana was about to reply, when her eyes were attracted by a stranger, who was coming towards them. She pointed him out to the Marquis: they observed that he walked with a slight degree of lameness.

On his near approach, both arose to meet him with that native grace of politeness, arising from a desire to succour a stranger, which foreigners are so remarkable for showing.

The stranger took off his hat, bowed, and seemed, by his courtly manner, not used to solicit; for there was a degree of pride and a commanding air about him which evinced a peculiar dignity of character. He was of middle stature, pale, and his high forehead shaded by his dark hair on one side, which hung in loose curls; his eyes were large, of a light hazel, expressive in an uncommon degree; his mouth was finely formed, and he had that peculiar air and countenance which showed his superiority over the generality of people they were accustomed to see and converse with.

"Presuming, sir," said he, addressing the Marquis, "upon the universal hospitality that has invariably met me in this country, I take the liberty of a stranger and a traveller to request accommodation for this evening, as I am informed you are the owner of the Villa below. The garden, which really seems to rival that of Eden, attracted me first to your enchanting, delightful habitation."

"I feel happy that its attractions have given me an opportunity of receiving you as my guest," most courteously replied the Marquis; "you might have been put to great inconvenience had you gone farther, for there is not another house within some distance: certainly, there is the church yonder, and the convent adjoining it."

The stranger bent his head gracefully, in token of acknowledgement for the kind reception, and seemed taller for having done so. His manner was not such as to excite familiarity; and the Marquis and Victoriana walked

on in silence down a gently sloping green hill, till they reached the avenue which led to the Villa.

“I should much like to visit the garden,” observed the stranger, “if quite agreeable.”

“Most certainly,” replied the Marquis, as he led the way.

As they entered the little gateway which led to the garden, a path presented itself to their view, which extended for nearly a quarter of a mile. The vines grew on each side the walk, and formed a complete canopy over head, and the whole extent of the walk was covered with the most luxuriant bunches of purple and green fruit. Nature and art seemed to have vied with each other in forming this delightful spot. The Villa presented itself to view as you walked up the avenue formed by the vines, and was nearly surrounded by fruit trees of different kinds; and the most beautiful shrubs and flowers were conveniently and tastefully arranged.

On entering this enchanting residence, every object that presented itself displayed the taste and wealth of the owner. The Marquis bade the stranger welcome; and this genuine hospitality won the confidence and gratitude of his guest. The Lady Victoriana retired to order refreshment, while the Marquis invited him to rest upon a couch, which he drew to the window.

The lattice opened down to the ground; and from one side of it was a view of rich woods, and of flocks and herds feeding on the adjacent hills and dales; whilst at a distance, on the other, was discerned the sea, and here and there a sail passing.

Directly opposite the window was one of the grandest

and most sublime scenes in nature. It was the beautiful Lake of Averno, whose glassy surface stretched as far as the eye could reach.

"The serenity of the evening," said the stranger, "seems to diffuse a gentle calm over the mind of man. I feel a tranquillity I have long been unused to; and you, sir, who seem to possess so many comforts in this happy climate and charming abode, cannot comprehend the feelings they excite in me: as whatever we are in the habit of experiencing we are apt to look upon as things of course, without properly reflecting upon and appreciating what, to others, seems so enviable."

"In your country men may be so ungrateful for the gifts of Providence," replied the Marquis; "but, *here*, we desire little and enjoy much."

"May I ask, without being deemed impertinent," said the stranger, "if you have long been in possession of this sweet spot?"

"I have lived here from my infancy," observed the Marquis, "and hope to end my days here. It was the residence of my paternal grandfather; and, during, his last illness, bequeathed to me. I have had the management of the vineyards for several years prior to his death; the garden is of my own forming; the house itself nearly so, for it was not what it is when I came into possession of the property; and I knew not, till his death, that I had been labouring for myself. But even this sweet abode, where nature has bestowed so many of her bounties, and which art has brought to the finest perfection, has lost a portion of its beauties. It ceased to be the abode of peace and joy—for true it is, that pure, unalloyed happiness is of too

celestial a nature to continue long an inhabitant of this lower world; and the dear objects whose presence rendered this a paradise to me, are, I trust, supremely happy in the regions of everlasting peace and joy, and where I trust soon to be permitted to rejoin them."

Here the Lady Victoriana re-entered the room, followed by a servant, bringing in fruits, eggs, milk, &c. for supper. The stranger gazed at her lovely figure as she advanced into the apartment, and then fell into a deep reflection, and his countenance was expressive of the most mournful sadness. At length he suddenly started from the painful reverie into which he had fallen, and, apologizing for his long silence, he sparingly partook of the delightful repast that had been spread before him, after which, the little conversation that passed was chiefly relative to the country they inhabited. They retired early to rest. The stranger also went into his chamber, but *not* to rest. He ruminated on the past and the present—sleep fled—his eyelids would not close—he traversed his elegant apartment, and then paused—"And *here*," said he, "is even comparative happiness for all but me. I am as the dove from the ark." His countenance was perturbed, his lips quivered with agitation, he leaned his forehead on his hand; by degrees, however, he became more composed; he threw himself on the bed, and seemed to lose himself in thought, which gently subsided into slumber. He was awakened in the morning by the little warbling songsters, who were met together in this delightful garden to celebrate the return of day. The stranger arose and went to the window, and beheld the Marquis and Lady Victoriana taking a morning walk; he

descended to the garden and joined them in a ramble, after which they returned to breakfast together. When the repast was finished, Lady Carautani retired to her apartment, leaving the stranger with the Marquis, who thus addressed him :—

“ I hope you will not think of departing to day. I most earnestly request your company. I will be your guide, and will show you such lovely spots as shall amuse, charm, and dissipate the cloud that hangs upon your forehead ; the scenes shall so enchant you that you will almost consent to forswear your own country for ours—for your own does not seem to have conferred much happiness upon you ; for who would run the risk of finding it in a foreign land, if he possessed it in his own ? ’Tis true, the shafts of affliction and sorrow have taken deep root in this unhappy breast, yet what is there that could tempt me to quit this spot ? If thy home had ever been as dear to thee, thou couldst not thus have left it, and become a wanderer in a foreign land.”

The stranger mournfully replied, “ The hand of Death has severed me from all I ever held dear on earth, and now all places are alike to me.”

“ Have you been thus unhappy long ?” enquired the Marquis, with the greatest sympathy and feeling ; “ what you said last night respecting yourself, has, I own, excited my curiosity. I should like much to be informed of your history.”

“ But I cannot remain longer than this day,” replied the stranger, “ as my attendants will be uneasy at my unusual absence.”

As he spoke he arose from his seat, and, approaching



the window, he raised it up, in so doing he said, "come my friend, if it will give you any satisfaction, you shall hear what brought me to this happy country—happy, I repeat, because here both nature and art seem to vie with each other to render every object pleasing to the sight, and interesting to the senses. Come, let us go and sit in yonder myrtle bower; I once had such a one myself, but—" and he paused.

The Marquis now led the way to the spot he had chosen. They seated themselves; he sighed heavily. "Ah! my friend," he exclaimed, "you have imposed a task—but, no matter."

His upper lip had a peculiar curl as he ceased speaking, and his countenance evinced for a time the emotions he strove to quell.

At length he said, "'Twas woman that formed the happiness of my life, and now its greatest source of grief and sorrow. But you shall hear all. Charlton is my native spot; I will not descant on its beauties; suffice it to say they no longer exist to charm me. My mother died a few days after I was born; and my father, when I was so young that I scarcely remember any other than the one to whom I now give the appellation, and who took me to his house as soon as my father was buried. I remember weeping very much at leaving my old home; but my tears were soon dried when I arrived at the cottage of Bernard, where everything was done to please me; and a little girl, their only child, who was younger than myself, was a nice playfellow for me. During our younger years, the good Bernard instructed us himself; but, as we grew up, we were each sent to different schools, to be per-

fects in those branches of polite education our future situation in life demanded. Ellen shed many tears at being separated from her dear brother, as she used to call me; I, too, felt equally grieved at parting. We never saw each other again, until she had completed her education. I was frequently allowed to visit the cottage, and Bernard always used to give me the best encouragement and advice to pay particular attention to my studies. As I grew older, I had my part allotted me in the farm; and Bernard used to say to me, ‘When you have had a little more experience, Edgar, I shall entrust you with a large farm.’ This made me particularly anxious to improve myself in general knowledge. I could not have had a more able counsellor, or better adviser, than Bernard. Years rolled away. My little playfellow, his daughter Ellen, was now grown a young woman. She had the sweetest temper in the world; and my love for her

‘Grew with my growth, and strengthened with my strength.’

I shall never forget the day she returned home, after having been at school so many years. She seated herself at the table with the most timid air, and partook of the repast; and while I partook of the refreshment myself, I had time to observe and admire her. She was quite a brunette; her dark eyes had, when she was grave, a sort of pensive expression; but a smile lit them up in so much brilliancy, that it was evident happiness and joy resided in her heart, for their image was reflected there. Her white teeth were frequently shown, for her mouth was not small, though her lips were so prettily shaped that you could not have wished it otherwise: she was slim, and

her limbs were delicately formed. She said little, but seemed interested in the conversation that passed. We both used to accompany Bernard to a most delightful estate, which he told me he took care of for a friend, who would claim it in a few years, and that he was particularly anxious to make it a desirable residence for him. Bernard one day took me with him, and placed me as master over this estate, and it was under his superintendence, at first, I began the cultivation of it; but, by degrees, as he saw me capable, he left me the sole guidance of it, and used to overlook the whole at stated intervals. I then always observed a peculiar satisfaction in his countenance. He would say—‘My dear Edgar, your labours are unremitting; you will have your reward when the master arrives. You must now think of building him a better house, and I trust to you to look after his comfort in everything: make it such as would satisfy yourself, if the property were to be your own.’ I must not omit telling you that Ellen was frequently the companion of my labours: she used to work with me in the garden; and her judgment and taste were frequently consulted, and adopted before my own.—We planned the house together, though frequently her mother would suggest little alterations, which we always found were improvements. Our evenings were spent in forming plans to beautify and adorn this delightful residence—to make it, to the best of our ideas, all that was desirable for its future possessor; and the good Bernard, and his wife Alicia, encouraged us with smiles of pleasure and approbation. Ellen would frequently say to me—‘How very sorry I shall be when this rich gentleman comes!’ My father gives him a good character, to

be sure ; but you will want employment, Edgar ; our farm will, I fear, seem quite a confinement to you. It is not my sorrow for this person's coming, but that you will lose the place, which is now so much like your own that I can scarcely believe it is not so.' When Ellen was not with me, I was always having something done ready against she *did* come ; and when I expected her in vain, it made me so melancholy and fretful to myself, that I neglected the beauties around me, and used to return in the evening, spiritless and dull, to the cottage, and question her, with a sort of jealousy, how she had been employed ; but I was soon brought into good humour by her presence. At last the demon jealousy took complete possession of me, and my uneasiness grew greater every day ; for my idea was, that as soon as the owner arrived to claim his property, he would immediately fall in love with Ellen, and Bernard would be too happy to see her so well married to refuse the offer."

Here they were interrupted by a servant entering with wine and biscuits, which, having placed upon a table, he instantly retired.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

Who has not marked the morning rise  
With genial warmth and glowing skies;  
With cheerful sun, and splendours gay—  
Nor seen those lovely charms decay!  
But e'er day's middle course he run,  
The skies are dark, and all we loved is gone.

After the servant had retired, and they had slightly partaken of the refreshment, the stranger again continued:—

“ One day that we were talking of her, I took an opportunity of saying to Bernard, ‘ Who knows but Ellen may be the future mistress of this place? Every one who sees her and knows anything of her, must love her; would you, my father, be glad if the friend whom you expect to arrive, should make her his wife?’ ‘ I confess to you, Edgar,’ replied Bernard, ‘ that it would make me very happy: if she were to be his wife, I should have lived to see my utmost wishes accomplished.’ ‘ But, father,’ hastily replied I, ‘ if she should not love him? If a man who had not this charm of riches should love her better

than his life, and she were to return that love?' 'Why then, Edgar, do you think me so tyrannical as to oppose it? It is her future happiness, and not aggrandisement, I seek. She is my only child; what I have will be her's at my death, and I hope God will bless her with *content*, let her lot be what it may. Her good mother's precepts will have been strangely thrown away, if she is not grateful for the blessings she does already enjoy, without repining after those out of her reach.' I felt rather easier after this discourse; but I could not take the same pleasure as formerly in the place, and did not like to hear Ellen admire it, and seem so completely happy when she was there. One evening Bernard had been here with me the greatest part of the day; his heart appeared full, for I frequently observed the tears ready to start from his eyes every time he looked at me; at length he said, 'Edgar, come! let us go and sit down under those trees, I have much to say to you.' I felt a tremor seize my whole frame—his manner was so different from what it usually was. After a long pause, 'Edgar,' said he, 'I have loved you as a son, can you recall any single instance of my omitting towards you the conduct of an affectionate father?' He paused, and looked anxiously at me for an answer. 'Not *one*—my kind friend—my father, —the only one I have ever known,' I replied. 'But not the only one who was anxious, most feelingly anxious, for your future welfare,' rejoined he; 'when your excellent parent was on his death-bed, he sent for me, and thus addressed me: My good, my faithful, long-tried friend, I feel I am not long for this world— I am dying! To whom can I commit my child—my only son—with perfect

confidence, but to yourself? Here his voice faltered; but, after a short pause, he again continued—He is very young, and I have a very handsome property to bequeath to him, the knowledge of it may make him idle and spoil him; and indolence, once become habitual, is not to be easily, if ever, eradicated. My last request then is, that you will take him as your own; let him not know his possessions until he is worthy of them; and if, contrary to *my* hopes and *your* care, he should be unworthy, I charge you give him sufficient to keep him above want, and bestow the remainder on virtue and industry, wherever you may meet with it. I have known your integrity for many years, and I rest assured that the confidence I put in you will not be misplaced.—He gave me the key to all his papers, and in a few hours after this bequest he breathed his last. You know the rest—you are all your fond and affectionate parent could have wished you, and all my cares are repaid. This lovely estate, such as you yourself have made it, is your own, and the profits of it have for many years accumulated; we can settle the accounts at our leisure.’ I threw myself into the arms of the good old Bernard, which were wide open to receive me—the tears ran down his cheeks—I wept for gratitude, and both of us for joy. You may guess, my dear Ellen was in my thoughts more than once; but utterance was for a time denied me. As soon as my agitation subsided, I said, ‘Ah! my father, dost thou think Ellen will love me? What are riches to me, without she shares them?’ He smiled—‘I cannot tell how *much* she loves you; but surely, Edgar, you can have no reason to doubt that she *does* love you?’ ‘No, she is



very attentive to my little comforts, and she is all that is kind and affectionate in her manners: but then she is so good to every body and everything!" "Well, we will soon see: let us return, or they will think us late. I have a plan in my head, and you must not betray me." We now walked homeward, and I cannot tell you my feelings when I observed Ellen coming to meet us. As she approached near to us, her father thus accosted her:—"Well, my dear Ellen, my young friend is arrived, and is now in possession of his property!" She stopped and looked grave and anxiously at me, but did not speak. He put his arm affectionately round her, and, leaning on her shoulder, walked on. At length she spoke, and raising her eyes and fixing them full upon me, she said, "Well, Edgar, how do *you* like him? I hope he has made proper acknowledgments to you, and is really pleased with all that you have been doing for him." I was going to reply, when Bernard interrupted me, by saying, "He is as grateful as you can wish him to be; and, to show it, Ellen, he wishes to make *you* mistress of his heart and fortune, and requests me to offer you his hand in marriage." "*Me*, father! marry *me*! Indeed I do not approve of that part of his gratitude. I beg you will tell him, and that as speedily as possible, that I have no inclination to marry." "Well, but, Ellen, see him yourself, and let him plead his own cause." "I again repeat I have no inclination to either see or hear him. I have lost all interest in the place, too, now that Edgar has done with it, and this is the last time I shall walk this way!" "But he is very rich!" "I am rich enough, father; I have everything I want. Besides, what would you and my

dear mother do without me ; and Edgar would be so dull, should you not, Edgar ?' said she, looking timidly at me. ' I declare, father, you are smiling ; I believe you wish me to marry this man.' ' I do, if you can love him.' ' But I cannot.' Here she turned pale, and burst into tears. I could not bear to see her so distressed. I went round and took her hand ; she trembled through agitation. ' You tremble, my dearest Ellen ;' said I, ' but I have done it more, during this discourse.' ' You have ! Edgar ?' she sobbed out, ' and why ?' ' Lest you should love any body better than you do me.' The paleness of her face was succeeded by a deep crimson. I continued, ' You have long been the sole possessor of my heart ; but I never had the courage till this moment to tell you so. I now do it, in the presence of your father. Tell me if it displeases you ?' She made no reply ; but, weeping still, with the hand that I had left at liberty, she hung round her father's neck. ' You were voluble enough just now, my daughter,' said he, ' will you not speak to poor Edgar ? We shall never get home to-night if you hold me so fast. I perceive I must answer for you.' He pressed us both in his arms, and we felt too happy for utterance. After a few minutes he said, ' Let us proceed home to make your mother as happy as we are, my Ellen. At the same time I must tell you that your happy Edgar is the owner of the immense riches you have been so resolutely refusing.' She was all astonishment. I then explained to her as we walked along ; and your imagination cannot picture a happier group than was assembled at the cottage that evening. In a few weeks I made her my bride : and her father and mother used occasion-

ally to spend whole nights and days at our happy dwelling. Happy! did I say? ah! too happy to last—for death entered our happy abode, and snatched my Ellen away from me for ever. In the eleventh month after our union she presented me with a lovely boy; and, on the the fourth day after its birth, their spirits flew, hand in hand, to heaven. Need I say more to account to you for the anguish—the grief—that press upon my mind, and renders existence a burthen? As soon as I had recovered a little from the sad state into which my severe loss had thrown me, I determined to travel for a time to see if change could alleviate my grief. I have travelled through France, and am now arrived in this delightful country; and must confess that I have felt more tranquillity of mind, during my short stay with you, than I have done since I left England.”

The Marquis expressed the pleasure he felt at this declaration: and observed that, “as all places were alike to him, at least for the present, he most earnestly entreated he would take up his abode at the Villa Averno for a time.”

The Marquis then briefly related to Edgar the misfortunes which had occasioned the grief which hung upon his own brow, and observed “that sympathy of feeling for each other’s griefs had created an attachment; and in each other’s society he hoped they should lose a portion, at least, of their sorrow.”

The stranger having consented to remain with the Marquis as he desired for a time, they adjourned to the house, and a servant was immediately dispatched to order his attendants to repair to the Villa

As the Marquis and his guest entered the saloon, he was pleased to behold his two nephews and his niece, the lovely Emelinetta di Dalmira, in lively converse with Lady Victoriana Carantani. After the usual salutations had passed, they all adjourned to the dining room to partake of an elegant and delightful repast.

The Marquis politely introduced Edgar and his nephew to each other, and briefly related the few necessary particulars which had transpired relative to his guest.

After the cloth was withdrawn, and the most delicious wines and fruits had been set upon the table, a general and pleasing conversation ensued.

The Marquis di Dalmira now informed his uncle that he had made every arrangement for visiting Naples; and that he proposed embarking, if a favourable wind permitted, that very month.

The Marquis said he would take care to have dispatches to his brother ready by that time; "but," said he, "Lady Carantani has politely offered to be the bearer of any letters I may have to send to Naples, for she is shortly bound to that quarter."

"Indeed!" exclaimed he, "if it will not be deemed impertinent, may I inquire by what vessel she will sail?"

Her Ladyship replied that "she had consented to accompany the Duchess of Castelamare to Sicily, and from thence she should embark for Naples."

His Lordship expressed the pleasure he should have in meeting her again in that delightful city.

About five o'clock the carriage was ready to convey the Lady Victoriana home, as that day week was the one she

had appointed to visit the Duchess : and she had many arrangements to make.

The Marquis Carantani expressed great regret at her leaving, as did the rest of the party.

The Marquis di Dahmira obtained permission to accompany her Ladyship home.

After their departure the Marquis Carantani and his guests took a ramble in the garden and beautiful plantations. They visited a Villa which had been begun to be built by the Count di Camilla, but which his sudden death had prevented being finished.

Edgar inquired of the Marquis "if he thought the present owner would feel disposed to finish, and let it for a period ? If so, he would engage it for his future residence for a time."

The Marquis replied, "that the young Count was on his travels at present, and the property was left in care of an agent, who resided at a pretty Villa on the other side of the lake. He, therefore, proposed that they should visit him on the morrow, to make the necessary inquiries."

On reaching the house they found the Marquis di Dahmira returned, having seen the Lady Victoriana safely home. They now took their leave, promising to join their uncle and his guest in their intended excursion on the following morning.

After they were gone, the Marquis and his guest sat conversing on various subjects until a late hour ; and Edgar, (Mr. Montfort, we shall call him in future,) entertained his Lordship with a brief description of Cheltenham, and his native place, Charlton.

“ You would, I think, be quite captivated,” said he, “ with Cheltenham and its surrounding villages—also its company and amusements ; there is a certain easy familiarity diffused over society there, which renders it delightful to strangers. All superfluous ceremony is excluded, and the law of good manners is almost the only restraint imposed on the company who frequent this favoured spot. The walk to the well is of great length, and is shaded by venerable elms, which exclude the fiercest rays of the mid-day sun. At short distances, on each side the walk, are placed seats and garden-chairs, for the different parties to rest ; and for some hours in the morning the whole promenade presents an animated assemblage of youth, beauty, and fashion. I will not descant on the qualities and virtues of the Cheltenham waters, as it would be no amusement to you to receive any information of that kind. The town is surrounded by beautiful villages, amongst which is my native place, Charlton ; and I hope, on my return to England, you will consent to accompany me, and judge for yourself whether the account I have given you is equal to the description and the reality.”

The Marquis observed “ that they could talk of that at a future period.”

They now retired to rest, and Mr. Montfort entered his apartment with feelings of greater tranquillity and ease than he had felt for a long period. He had been forcibly struck with the very great resemblance Lady Emelinetta bore to his lovely departed Ellen, both in manners and person ; and if her heart and affections were disengaged, he resolved upon offering her his hand and fortune ; for,

although he felt he should never love another with that ardent affection which he had felt for Ellen, yet he thought he could, in the society of Lady Emelinetta, regain tranquillity of mind and become comparatively happy. The drowsy god at length put an end to his reflections, and he slept till morning.

When the Marquis and Mr. Montfort met at the breakfast table, after the morning salutations had passed, the Marquis could not help observing the altered appearance of Mr. Montfort, and expressed the great pleasure he felt at seeing him thus recovering his health and spirits.

“ I must own your society and this delightful residence has done wonders for me,” said he, “ and if the agent has the power of finishing that building for me, I shall hope, in that charming spot, and the friendly society around me, to regain my wonted composure of mind.”

A servant now entered to say that the horses were ready, and that the Marquis di Dalmira and his party were in the court below.

They descended to the court and joined the little party, and the cavalcade set forward on their excursion. Mr. Montfort attached himself to the side of Lady Emelinetta, and attempted to engage her in conversation ; at first she only answered him in monosyllables, but by degrees she became more animated, and joined him in a lively conversation.

As they journeyed on Mr. Montfort was highly delighted with the beauties of the surrounding country, rendered still more brilliant and interesting by the beautiful reflection of the landscape on the clear transparent waters of Averno. When they drew near the Villa Luca,



the Marquis Carantani alighted, and, requesting the rest of the party to do the same, they entered a narrow path which led into the pleasure grounds that surrounded the house.

One of the attendants went forward to see if Mr. Stainhault was at home, when that gentleman came out to meet the party.

The Marquis introduced the subject of their visit, and was informed that if the property would let well, it was to be finished in the best possible style.

Mr. Montfort then entered into terms of agreement for seven years, and to have it completed and made fit for him to inhabit as soon as possible.

The party then took their leave, and returned through the beautiful plantations and pleasure grounds which led to the Chateau di Dalmira. This was the delightful residence of the present Marquis, to whom it had been bequeathed. His father had been dead about three years, leaving himself and a younger brother, the Count Loretto, and his sister, the Lady Emelinetta. The late Marquis had died worth immense property, leaving it equally divided among his three children, except the estate at which they resided. Their mother was the daughter of a rich Neapolitan nobleman. The Marquis di Dalmira had paid his court to her against the wishes of her father, and she was placed in the Convent of St. Ursula, from which she eloped with the Marquis a few days prior to that which was fixed for her taking the veil. For several years her father was inexorable; but, being seized with a complaint which baffled all the skill of his physicians, who declared him to be in danger, he sent for his only child, the Mar-

chioness di Dalmira. She arrived in time to receive his dying blessing and forgiveness. He had made his will, in which he bequeathed her the whole of his immense property, for her use during her life, and to her children after her decease. The Marquis survived her Ladyship but a few weeks: he had been in an infirm state of health a long time before the Marchioness was taken ill, and the shock occasioned by her sudden death hastened his end also. It was to investigate the property left them by their grandfather that the present Marquis was about to visit Naples, and every preparation was making for him to embark on the day we have before mentioned. He intended to sail in his own vessel, which was being fresh fitted out for the voyage. The day was spent in the most friendly manner at the Chateau, and in the evening the Marquis Carantani and his guest returned to the Villa Averno.

Mr. Montfort and the Marquis had not now much leisure to brood over their late sorrows, for their time was much taken up in viewing the workmen employed in finishing his future residence; they also would sometimes accompany the Marquis di Dalmira to witness the progress made in the fitting up of his vessel, and the Lady Emily, and the Count, her brother, were always of the party.

The day on which the Marquis di Dalmira had appointed to embark on Naples was ushered in with a favourable wind; a large party was invited to dine on board, amongst whom were the Marquis Carantani and Mr. Montfort. A band of the *Lazzaroni* followed the attendants to the side of the vessel, and amused the company

with the most enchanting music. At four o'clock the vessel was got under weigh, and the party, having taken leave of the Marquis, repaired to their different boats. The wind proving favourable, the vessel was soon out at sea, and the party returned to the land. As they were getting on shore Mr. Montfort assisted the Lady Emelinetta out of the boat, and one of the gentlemen stood on the brink to take hold of her hand, when, as she stepped on the bank, he unfortunately let go his hold, and she fell into the water. A dreadful out-ery was made by the party on shore; and Mr. Montfort instantly plunged into the water after her, and happily succeeded in catching hold of her clothes before she went under a second time. He immediately swam with her to the shore, but she was quite insensible for a long time. As soon as she began to revive, she was instantly placed in the carriage and taken home. Medical advice had been immediately sent for, and, happily, no very serious illness arose from the accident, although she continued very unwell for some time, in consequence of the fright and having continued in her wet clothes so long. Mr. Montfort merely took a slight cold; he was a daily visitor at the Chateau, to inquire after the fair invalid.

The Marquis Carantani had, for some time, suspected that his guest more than merely admired his lovely niece; and this late accident confirmed his suspicions. He took more pains with his dress, and whenever her name was mentioned, his manner strongly indicated the interest he felt.

One day that they were together viewing his future residence, which was then nearly completed, the Marquis.

looking significantly at him, said, "I think you will want a companion in this large house, you will be lonely by yourself. Shall you not, my dear friend?"

"Ah! my dear sir," said Montfort, "I will not withhold from you the wishes of my heart. I feel convinced you are no stranger to the passion which has taken deep root there. Almost from the first moment I beheld your lovely niece, the Lady Emelinetta di Dalmira, I have felt as if my Ellen was again an inhabitant of this world, she is so like her in person and manners. Will your Lordship assist in pleading my cause with this lovely fair one?"

"There will be no necessity, I feel convinced," said the Marquis, "your fate on that point is certainly fixed, without my interference."

"What am I to infer from your Lordship's words? Do you think her heart is already engaged?" said Montfort, eagerly.

"I do not certainly feel convinced that it is," said the Marquis, "but you have my most hearty consent to make the inquiry. I think you had better write to her on this subject, and I will deliver the letter."

"Please do with pleasure."

"But now she is," interrupted the Marquis.

Montfort hurried her to alight from the carriage. Disdaining to make his horse look off of hers, and he could, with decency conceal the alarm he felt at beholding her. She appeared ill, and her face was as pale as death. He anxiously inquired after her health, which he informed him was very much better; but that she still felt the effects of her fright. The earnestness of his manner

produced a blush on her cheek, as he led her into the hall. The Marquis here joined them, and, as he congratulated her on her *rosy* appearance, said he was glad to see her recovered, and enquired after the Count, her brother. She said he was gone round by the Villa Nuovo, and would be there presently, unless they went down to join him there. This they consented to do, and the Marquis led the way.



## CHAPTER XXXIII

Hope, thou banisher of sorrow,  
Soothe me with thy smiling ray :  
Whisper, that the happy morrow  
Every sigh shall chase away.

The dying confession of Raddino having been laid before the Holy Tribunal, and the innocence of Di Salvo clearly proved and acknowledged, an order was procured for his immediate release : and a few days after the death of the Confessor he was emancipated from the gloomy walls of the Inquisition, and restored to his beloved and anxious

parent, at the Count di Romano's, the friend with whom he had resided since his arrival at Rome. Di Salvo received the affectionate embraces of his father with feelings indescribable; and then turned to acknowledge the congratulations of the numerous friends who had assembled to witness and partake of the joy that was generally felt at his release from his awful imprisonment.

Di Salvo was just seated to partake of some refreshment, when a loud noise was heard in the hall, and instantly he distinguished the voice of Bardo, entreating to be admitted.

"Let me pass! let me pass! I will see him!" exclaimed he, "or may all of you who dare attempt to stop me be sent to the Inquisition yourselves. Let me pass!" he still vociferated, as they had attempted to prevent his entering the saloon. "You don't know what an infernal place he has escaped from; but I do, and I will see him!" So saying, he upset one or two of the servants, and pushing by the rest, in the next instant he burst into the room, followed by a group of laqueys, who, however, stood at the door, fearful of the anger of their lord; and yet they could scarcely help laughing. As Bardo sprang forward to embrace his master, he had nearly upset some of the company. He threw himself at the feet of Di Salvo, and wept aloud for joy, exclaiming, "Oh! my dear master—my dear master!" This was a moment of unfeigned joy to Di Salvo—such an one as he had not experienced since his meeting with his father; and he was so rejoiced himself to meet his faithful servant again and without the walls of that gloomy prison, that he gave way to the joy which he felt, and answered all the

questions of Bardo, without even stopping to apologise to the astonished company for his rudeness.

The servants now entered to repair the mischief he had done, and the confusion he had created, by replacing the chairs and picking up the snuff-boxes, &c. that he had overturned on his way to his master. While the laqueys were thus employed, Di Salvo and Bardo were occupied in talking over all the news he had to communicate from Naples; and so engrossed were they in each other's society, that they seemed to have forgotten that any one else was in the room. The Marquis, therefore, was obliged to take upon himself to apologise for the rudeness of Bardo; and at the same time hoped every excuse would be allowed, as he had not seen his master since they were together in the Inquisition. He then called upon his son to remember where he was, and to dismiss Bardo immediately; but in vain did he repeat his commands, he was in the middle of a most interesting story, and Di Salvo was equally as anxious to hear the conclusion, as his servant was to communicate it. At length Di Salvo, recollecting himself, endeavoured to raise Bardo from his knees; for, on the Marquis requesting he might leave the room, he had sunk on his knees, and began again to pour forth his whole heart at his master's feet.

"Oh! my dear master!" he exclaimed, "if you could but know how miserable I was when I got out of the Inquisition and left you there alone; and would you send me away now that I have got you safe again? Oh!" he continued, "if you knew how I wandered about the walls of that horrid place half the night, and what



it cost me to leave them, you would not now want to send me away. Nor should I have left them as I did, if it had not been for that good fellow Dencarlo.—Oh! San Paulo! I thought my very heart would have broke. I do think I should have gone back and have begged to die with you; but I would not do the poor fellow an injury who let me out, for he did it for the best; and, sure enough, as it has proved, it was all for the best, for I would not let my Lord the Marquis rest until he came and tried to get your release, and so here we are, my dear master, all together.”

The remembrance of his past grief and trouble now rushed across his mind, and again he sunk on his knees, and sobbed and laughed with such sudden transition, that Di Salvo began to fear for him. When suddenly becoming calm, he looked up in his master's face and said gravely, but with eagerness, “Pray, Signor, was not the roof of your little prison peaked at the top, and was there not a battlement all round the turret?—and was there not—”

Di Salvo, regarding him for a moment, replied smiling, “Why, my good Bardo, you rave, you cannot be in your senses. How could the roof of my prison have a peak on the top, when it was underground?”

“That is very true, Signor,” replied Bardo, stroking down his hair over his forehead. “I did not happen to think of that at the time; I am certain, though, it was as I say. Oh! Signor, I thought that roof would have broken my heart! O! how I did look at it! and now to think that I am here with you once again, and you want to send me away!”

As Bardo concluded the last sentence, his tears and sobs returned with redoubled violence, and Di Salvo, overcome by this new instance of Bardo's faithfulness and affection, compelling him to rise, embraced him with his whole heart, and presented him to the company as his faithful friend—as his chief deliverer.

The Marquis, greatly affected by the scene he had witnessed, and with the truth of Di Salvo's words, condescended to give Bardo a hearty shake by the hand, and to thank him warmly for the bravery and fidelity he had displayed in his master's interest.

"I shall never be able sufficiently to reward your attachment;" added he, "but what remains for me to do shall be done. From this moment I make you independent, and, in the presence of this noble company, I promise you a thousand sequins, as some acknowledgment of your services."

Bardo did not appear pleased, or express all the gratitude for this gift which the Marquis expected. He stammered, and bowed, and blushed, and at length burst into tears: and when Di Salvo inquired what it was that seemed to distress him so much? he replied, "Why, Signor, of what use are a thousand sequins to me, if I am to be independent? Of what use, if I am not permitted to remain and live with you?"

Di Salvo now bid him make himself perfectly easy; and assured him that he should always remain in his family unless he chose to remove himself; and that he should consider it as an imperative duty to render his future life happy.

"You shall, henceforth," added Di Salvo, "be placed

at the head of my household, have the management of my servants, and the whole of my domestic concerns shall be committed to your care, as a proof of my entire confidence in your integrity and attachment; and because this is a situation that will allow you always to be near me."

"Grazia, Signor mio, grazia!" replied Bardo, in a voice rendered almost inarticulate by his feelings of gratitude, "so that you will but allow me to stay with you, all I ask is to live and die in your service. But I sincerely hope my Lord Marquis will not for a moment think me ungrateful in refusing to accept the thousand sequins he was so kind to offer me, if I would but be independent: for I thank him just as much as if I had received them, and a great deal more."

The Marquis now smiled heartily at Bardo's mistake, as did the rest of the company. "But," said he, "as I do not perceive that your remaining with your master can, in the least, disqualify you from accepting a thousand sequins, I command you to receive them, on pain of my severe displeasure; and, whenever you marry, I shall expect you will further obey my wishes, by accepting another thousand from me with your wife as her dower."

The heart of honest Bardo now overflowed with the kindness bestowed upon him, it was too much for his grateful feeling just at this time, when joy had nearly deprived him of his senses, and sobbing out his thanks he exclaimed, "this is too much, Signor," and ran from the room to give vent to the feelings which quite overwhelmed him.

His conduct had drawn murmurs of applause from the assembly ; who each testified their admiration of his praise-worthy conduct, and honest attachment to his master.

In a few days Di Salvo, feeling quite restored, and having enjoyed the hospitality and received the congratulations of his friends, proposed to leave Rome ; and the Count di Romano consented to accompany the Marquis and his son to Naples. They arrived there without any interruption ; but it was a melancholy journey to Di Salvo ; for, on having introduced the subject to his father respecting his attachment to Amanda, the Marquis informed him that, under the present unforeseen circumstances, he must positively relinquish Amanda Lusinette, if it should really be proved that she was the daughter of the late father Raddino.

On his arrival at Naples, every object that he saw increased his agitation, and reminded him of the past joys and sorrows that he had endured ; and his impatience to visit Altiere and learn if his Amanda really was safe at the Convent Della Martino, became almost insupportable ; and, with a revived joy, so powerful as to overcome every fear, and every melancholy consideration which the late conversation with his father had occasioned, he hastened to have an interview with the good old Annetta, the first night of his arrival, prior to his visiting the Convent. As he entered the well-known portal, his heart beat high with expectation at what would be the feelings of the old domestic when she saw him. He hastily entered the little gate, when, recollecting himself, he thought it would be more prudent to go round to the front entrance, as An

netta might feel timid should she hear any one approach at the back gate. He rang the bell, when almost instantly the gardener opened the door.

"Holy San Paulo!" exclaimed the man, "is it you, Signor? the holy Saint be praised for your safe return. We all thought you was dead, sure enough, until the night Mr. Bardo convinced us to the contrary, by saying you would soon be here. By our holy Saint I am rejoiced to see you. Annetta!" he now loudly vociferated, "here, come and gladden your eyes by a sight of the good Signor; here he is, safe among us again!"

The good Annetta now came hobbling into the hall as fast as her old limbs would allow her, when, falling on her knees, she exclaimed, "Thanks to our blessed Saint, it is he! Oh! how rejoiced will my dear lady be when she knows you are safe returned."

"And is she safe and well, my good Annetta?" eagerly inquired Di Salvo; when he was informed that she was quite safe and well, "and she will be happy now you are returned," said the old domestic archly.

"Pray, Signor, shall you go and see her to night?" enquired she.

"No, my good Annetta; now that I know she is safe, I shall defer it till to-morrow."

"Oh! Santo Maria!" again exclaimed the old woman, "we shall all be happy again!"

Di Salvo, after making a few more inquiries, took his leave, saying he should see them again on the morrow.

"But," said Di Salvo, returning to the door, and beckoning Annetta to him, "do you know which part of the Convent your lady reposes in?"

" Ah ! Signor mio ! " said she, " you remember the little turret that overlooks the bay, and which we admired so much on our return from old Rodonal's cabin. You wished then that my lady was safe there, and now I do assure you that her apartments are in that pretty turret."

" Thank you, good Annetta, for the information : good night."

" Buona sera a Vossignoria," significantly returned the old domestic.

Di Salvo was too much overjoyed to think of returning home so soon : he therefore sauntered down by the sea side, and wandered along the shore as far as old Rodonal's cabin. He had just turned the projection of the rock which led to the hut, when the moon, emerging from behind a cloud, presented the old man walking before him.

" What, ho ! " said Di Salvo, loud enough to recall the old man.

" Buona sera, Signor ! " exclaimed Rodonal, " why, Signor, have you had another loss ? "

" No, my good fellow," said Di Salvo, " I wish to ask you which is the nearest path to that part of the Convent yonder that overlooks the bay."

" Ah ! Signor, it struck me, your being here at this time, that you had met with another lass. I have often trembled at the old woman having been brought here in such a plight."

" It was no laughing matter," replied Di Salvo, " but on each of that, which is the path ? "

" Why, Signor, come on and I will show you."

They now reached the cabin, when, turning down a

path for a few yards, "there," said Rodonal, pointing forward, "that is Saint Ursula's Turret, which overlooks the bay, and this path leads right up to it."

Di Salvo now thanked Rodonal, and wishing him good night, he made his way up to the building.

He wandered about the outside wall for some time, at length he got over a low part of it, and, having approached one of the lower windows, he listened attentively to hear if there was any sound within; not hearing any, he took the little reed from his pocket and played one of the airs which Amanda used to listen to with such indescribable feelings when seated in the little turret at the Convent of Santa della Floriano. He ceased playing, still all remained silent; he therefore returned home, and retired to rest, but not to sleep: his thoughts were too much occupied.

With the first dawn of day he arose, and again hastened to the Convent which contained all he held dear. Having reached the garden gate he entered, when, it still being very early, he wandered along the terrace which overlooked the bay, and entered the avenue that led to the grove. He had not wandered far, when the sound of a lute sweetly stole upon his ear. He paused to listen, and became quite enraptured at the well-known sound. He approached nearer the spot from whence the sounds proceeded, and beheld his beloved Amanda seated upon a crag that hung over the rock. She had ceased playing, and sat with her head reclining on her hand. He stood regarding her for some time, fearful of interrupting her reverie. She spoke, but he was not near enough to hear distinctly, what she said: he approached



nearer, behind the crag, when, gently raising herself from her reclining posture, she again touched the strings of her lute, and with a plaintive, melancholy voice, she faintly repeated the following beautiful

### LINES :

With Music's soft sounds I would banish my fears,  
Nor yield to my eyes the indulgence of tears ;  
But the tremulous notes, from my lips as they part,  
Betray the emotions that gladden my heart.

Ah ! 'tis fruitless to stem the full torrent of grief,  
By arts that afford such uncertain relief ;  
For the trembling strings vibrate still of the past,  
And echo of moments too pleasing to last.

Be hushed, then, ye strains, once so sweet to my ear,  
Nor bring to my thoughts recollections so dear ;  
Be my lute on the willows hung high in the air,  
And the wind's dying murmurs shall visit it there.

Di Salvo instantly respondey to the air.

Amanda arose from her seat, she gazed wildly around, as if she doubted her senses.

"Gracious heaven !" she exclaimed, "it must be the same,-- it is !"

Di Salvo now sprung forward to meet her, when uttering a faint shriek, and with his name quivering on her lips, she sank fainting into his arms.

He pressed her closely to his throbbing heart, when

calling tenderly on her name she quickly revived, and in the next moment they beheld each other once again.

In such a meeting, and after the long uncertainty and terror which each had suffered for the fate of the other, their joy at thus meeting was exalted almost to agony. Amanda wept, and some minutes elapsed before she could reply to Di Salvo's few words of tender exclamation, and it was long ere she was tranquil enough to observe his altered appearance. The animated expression of his countenance was unchanged; yet, when the first glow of joy had faded from it, and she had leisure to observe his wanness, she understood but too certainly that he had been a prisoner in the Inquisition.

During this interview, and as it was yet very early, (for Amanda generally took a walk as soon as the sun was up) —at her request, Di Salvo briefly related the particulars of his adventures since their separation at the Chapel at Celano; but, when he came to that part of the narration where it was absolutely necessary to mention Raddino, he paused in the utmost confusion and distress, not unmingled with a degree of horror. Di Salvo could scarcely endure the idea of even hinting to Amanda any part of his unjust conduct towards himself; nor could he bear to afflict her with a knowledge of the death of him, whom he believed to be her parent. His embarrassment now became too obvious for concealment, and was still increased by her enquiries. It now became really necessary to introduce the subject which lay nearest his heart, that of his having discovered her parent to be living. The satisfaction immediately apparent upon Amanda's countenance added to the distress he already felt, and his reluctance to

proceed: believing as he did that the event he had to communicate must change her gladness into grief.

During this conversation, they had proceeded slowly down the avenue, and were now at the entrance to the Convent. Di Salvo entered the parlour with her, and Amanda continued the conversation so interesting to them both by expressing the happiness she had received from the discovery of a parent, whose virtues had won her affection long before she understood her own interest in them. It was with the greatest difficulty that Di Salvo could conceal his surprise at such an avowal of prepossession, for the manners of the Father Raldino, of whom he believed her to be speaking, had certainly never been adapted in his opinion to inspire tenderness. But, his surprise was turned into joy, when Heloisa, who had been informed that a stranger was in the parlour, now entered, and was introduced to Di Salvo as the mother of his Amanda. Heloisa expressed the happiness she felt at seeing him again; and Di Salvo, on his part, expressed his surprise at finding her a resident at the Convent Della Martino: and before he left them, a full explanation took place, and was given on both sides, to the infinite joy and happiness of Di Salvo, who was quite in a transport of bliss at the intelligence that Amanda was not the daughter of Raldino—and the Lady Heloisa had the satisfaction to know, and feel, that she had no future evil to apprehend from him who had hitherto been her worst enemy. The manner of his death, however, with all the particular circumstances, as unfolded by his late trial, Di Salvo was careful to conceal from her.

When Amanda had withdrawn from the room, Di Salvo

made a full acknowledgment to Heloise of his long attachment to her daughter, and supplicated for her consent to their marriage.

To this application, she replied, "that she had long been no stranger to their mutual affection, or to the different circumstances which had both proved its durability and tried their fortitude; yet she never could consent that her daughter should become a member of any family whose principal was averse to receive her; who was insensible to her worth, or unwilling to acknowledge it,—and that it would be necessary for his father to become a suitor, and on which condition, only, she allowed him to hope for her acquiescence."

This information did not damp the hopes of Di Salvo, now that Amanda was proved not to be the daughter of the Count di Barretto, the murderer, but of his only brother, who had been nobles—respectable in character than in rank, and he had little doubt that his father would consent to fulfil the promise he had given to the dying Marchioness, and more especially now that her birth was noble.

Di Salvo now returned home with an extacy of feeling not to be described. He instantly repaired to his father's cabinet, where, on his entering, perceived that some new feeling of joy pervaded his countenance. He listened very attentively to the account Di Salvo gave, and assured him that, if upon a minute and strict enquiry the statement he had made relative to the birth of Amanda should prove true, he would no longer oppose or withhold his consent to the wishes and happiness of his son.

The Marquis promised to have an immediate enquiry made into the affair, and Di Salvo then left the room.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

When gentle hope, with mild control,  
 Bids ev'ry wish in fancy live;  
 She with my raptur'd spirit talks,  
 Her charming smiles attend my walks.

Her visions float before my eyes,  
 And bid each golden dream arise;  
 In soothing whispers steals away the hours,  
 And strews my path with fancy's fairest flowers.

As Di Salvo left his father's study, he met in the gallery leading to his own apartment the Count di Romanelli, who was just returned from taking his morning ramble among the delightful vineyards and plantations that surrounded the Palace.

Di Salvo invited him into the room, and after the few morning salutations had passed, he named to the Count (who was already fully acquainted with his attachment to the Lady Amanda Lusnette,) the conversation which had just passed between himself and his father; as also the facts, that Amanda was not the daughter of the Count Geraldio di Barretto, commonly called the Father Ral-

dino,) but of his eldest brother, the Count di Fernando, who had been basely and cruelly murdered on his return from Greece, some years since, by the vile agents of his revengeful brother.

Di Salvo then related the full particulars, as related to himself by the Countess, and observed, that his father had just given him his promise to have the affair minutely investigated as speedily as possible.

The Count di Romano then offered his services to assist in making the necessary investigation.

Di Salvo expressed the gratitude he felt for the kind interest he evinced for his future happiness; and the Count then left him to attend the Marquis in his study.

When he entered the room at breakfast the Count was urging the immediate inquiry into the different circumstances just related to him by Di Salvo, relative to the relationship between the Lady Heloise and Amanda; and the fact that she was, in reality, only the niece of the late father Raldino.

When the repast was ended, Di Salvo left his father and the Count to make what inquiries or arrangements they should think proper on the occasion. On re-entering his own apartment, he felt such a restlessness and impatience pervade his mind, that, to dissipate the unpleasant sensations, he resolved upon taking a ride; and for this purpose he rang the bell.

On his servant appearing he ordered his horse to be got ready immediately; then, equipping himself, he set out to visit his friend Lorio Durazzo; but it is impossible to describe his consternation and grief, when, on his arrival at Villa Pietro, he was, for the first time, in-

formed of his friend's untimely and melancholy death. In relating the particulars of the dread catastrophe to him, all the grief of the Marquis Durazzo was again renewed; and the sad intelligence, as also grief for the loss of so sincere and beloved a friend and acquaintance, so painfully overwhelmed the feelings of Di Salvo, that he was compelled to leave the room for a time and retire into the garden to give free vent to the feelings which quite oppressed him.

On his re-entering the saloon, he found the Marquis in earnest conversation with his friend Lozaro di Gracio, who had just arrived at the Villa, and who appeared heartily glad to see him again after his long absence.

The Lady Janetta now made her appearance, and as she entered the room Di Salvo was very forcibly struck with her lovely mournful appearance. She was clad in deep mourning. Di Salvo soon learnt that his friend Lozaro was the highly-favoured and accepted admirer of the Lady Janetta; and he felt truly glad, for although he could, himself, only admire her as the sister of his lost friend, Lorio, yet he felt really pleased at the choice she had made, as he well knew the virtues of his long-tried friend, Lozaro, were such as would ensure a lasting happiness in their union.

At the request of the Marquis Durazzo, Di Salvo briefly related the trials he had endured, and the misery he had experienced, since last they saw each other; and he received their hearty congratulations on his escape from such imminent danger and distress. They expressed the happiness they felt at seeing him returned in health and safety.



It was at a late hour when Di Salvo and Lozaro di Gracio took their leave of the Marquis and his lovely daughter, promising again to pay an early visit at the Villa Pietro.

As these friends journeyed home, their conversation was chiefly relative to their lost friend, Lorio, and each expressed the sorrow they felt for his untimely and unhappy fate.

Lozaro gave him an account of the funeral, and of the deep sorrow expressed by every individual present at the mournful event.

On their arrival at the Palace Di Salvo, these sincere friends parted with that warm feeling of attachment subsisting between them, which ever unites congenial virtuous minds.

Di Salvo, finding his father and the Count had retired for the night, immediately withdrew to rest also.

In the morning he learnt that the Count di Romano had lost no time; but had commenced making the necessary inquiries relative to the identity of the Lady Heloisa with the present Countess Di Barretto. The physician who had assisted in her escape to the Convent Della Floriano, as well as the female servant, Maria, were still living, and they were sufficient to bear testimony to the facts related, and would render the Lady Heloisa's identity fully unquestionable.

The last evening that Di Salvo was at the Convent Della Martino, the Countess, as we must now call her, expressed the strongest wish that he would assist in substantiating the facts she had already stated to him, and the better to enable him to do so, she gave him the phy-

sician's address, as also every information that would assist in discovering the family Maria was still living with. A few weeks after she left the Countess, she went to reside at the Count di Ravenna's, at Florence, and as she had been recommended to this family by the physician, he could, most probably, give the information required respecting her.

Di Salvo now laid these directions before the Count di Romano, who consented to accompany him to Florence, where the physician then resided.

Immediately on their arrival in the city, they repaired to the residence of Dr. Henrique Belcour—he was not at home, but hourly expected. They were invited to walk in and await his return, but this they politely declined, and preferred taking a ramble to view the celebrated city of Florence. They were highly gratified with a sight of the different relics of this ancient place, and could have spent many a long day in viewing its grandeur, had time permitted.

On their return to the Villa Bianchi, they found the Doctor returned. He received them in the most polite and friendly manner, and on the Count di Romano making known the purport of their visit, he appeared to be greatly surprised; but instantly confirmed the truth of what the Countess had related, and expressed his perfect willingness to visit Naples for the purpose of proving the facts as already stated.

Di Salvo then inquired where Maria was to be found, as her testimony would be absolutely necessary, as she had lived with the Countess during the life of her first husband, the father of the Lady Amanda; and it was

probable that she would be able to prove also that Amanda was not the daughter of the father Raldino.

The physician here observed that there would be some little difficulty and trouble in ascertaining her present abode, for she had left Florence with the Count di Ravenna and his family, who were gone to reside at Granada for a period.

The question now was, which would be the best manner of proceeding there. The Doctor proposed their taking up their abode with him for the night, and on the following morning embarking in the first vessel that might sail for the nearest port.

As this appeared the best mode of expediting their journey they consented, and at an early hour retired to rest, feeling much fatigued from the exertions of the day. The Doctor gave the proper directions to the residence of the Count, and on the following morning, the wind proving favourable, they were soon on board a vessel bound for the port of Almeria: and, very fortunately, one of the gentlemen on board was bound for the same place as themselves, who could give them every direction how to proceed.

On their landing, they were assailed by a crowd of mendicants, who, by their persevering importunities, were exceedingly troublesome. A few filthy monks, and banditti-looking soldiers, with vagabonds of every other description, swelled the crowd.

They soon got clear of the crowd, and found themselves in a handsome public square; from thence they were entangled in a labyrinth of narrow and irregular streets, the appearance of which at once dissipated the

apparent absurdity of many of the tales of Spanish romance. Here intrigue might veil itself in secrecy, or the assassin strike in security his midnight victim.

In Spain the streets are seldom more than ten or twelve feet wide, and frequently less; and so crooked, that in many of them almost every house has a different front. The buildings are very high, which adds to the darkness of the streets.

In most of those of the better order, there are no windows in the lower story which open on the street; and, in many, the upper stories are also destitute of them.

Those windows which overlook the street are generally grated; and to almost every house there is a balcony from the second story, covered with an awning, and frequently surrounded with curtains. Here the ladies sit during the afternoon or evening unseen, except by those at whose approach the curtain is for a moment withdrawn.

These places are generally so situated as not to be exposed to the eye of any prying neighbour, so that Signora may converse with her lover without the danger of detection.

The entrance into the Spanish houses is commonly by a large door, or rather a huge gate, which opens into a dark passage. At the end of this another door opens into an area, or court-yard, paved with stone, round which the house appears to be built, the doors and windows of the chamber opening into it.

There are balconies on a level with each floor, with stair-cases leading up to them. Here, notwithstanding the heat of the climate, is generally a cool retreat; and the luxurious, though selfish Spaniard, whose home is his

world, and who lives but to enjoy his life, fills it with objects calculated to delight the ear and charm the senses; and, combining taste with enjoyment, he “wisely sets for show” around him the feathered songsters, the fragrant herb, and the luscious fruit of his climate; and here in the afternoon Don Surly smokes his segar, while his lady is taking the air alone.

The houses are, for the most part, paved with stone throughout, which adds to their cleanliness and coolness. They cannot, however, exclude from them a smell of garlic, which pervades the air of the city.

The Almeida, or public walk, is about a hundred yards wide, and several hundred in length. It is paved with gravel, and planted with several rows of trees; the latter, however, are but small now, having been cut down by the order of Buonaparte at the time he robbed their churches, and since replanted.

At one end is a serpent fountain, ornamented with some handsome marble figures, and at regular distances along the walk are marble seats. The houses on each side are lofty; and the *tout ensemble* has an appearance of elegance and taste.

There, in the evening, all ranks are assembled;—the ludicrous and insignificant-looking Spanish officer, the ferocious soldier, the gentleman, with his short-waisted coat, the hooded monk, the tawny mountaineer, and half a dozen classes of other rank, degenerate Spaniards. All these, mingled together, form a pleasing and interesting variety, which, with the addition of the American officers, the foreigners generally, and the ladies in their different costumes, is absolutely striking. The Spanish lady, in a

black silk dress, tastefully adapted to the symmetry of her fine form, with a lace veil of the same colour thrown negligently over the head, without concealing either her "glossy hair of jet black," her fine eye, or her animated face, is an object of no small attraction.

They are not, it is allowed, generally so beautiful as our own countrywomen; but there is a fascination in the singularity, neatness, and display of their dress, and in the warmth and enthusiasm of their manners, which gives them a momentary charm over the modest and retiring grace to which we have been accustomed at home.

I spent a part of each evening while I remained at Malaga on the walk, and could have passed many more with pleasure. There the gravity of the Spaniard was not seen. Every face was serene and cheerful; and the influence of a delightful climate and cloudless sky seemed to operate with the same pleasing effect upon all ages and conditions.

Hilarity, pleasure, and complaisance seemed to be the reigning duties; but suddenly, as the clock struck seven, and the convent bells rung for vespers, every smile vanished—every accent was hushed—each head was uncovered—and each eye bent to the ground;—a moment was spent in silent prayer, and then every one resumed his gaiety.

The Spanish officers possess none of that dignity of appearance which one has reason to expect. The vulgarity of their appearance is only equalled by the meanness of their dress. Their coats are single-breasted, and somewhat in the fashion of the English, but so short that the fore part extends but little below the breast, while a pair

of long narrow skirts commence about the middle of the back, and extend barely to the hips. This is surmounted by an epaulet, swung forward off the shoulder, and hanging loosely by the button. The *chapeau* is enormously large; and the pantaloons are generally of yellow nankeen, of all things in the world the meanest that a soldier can possibly wear. Upon the whole their appearance is so ludicrous and so trifling, that I hardly knew whether to laugh at or to pity them. The latter feeling, however, most frequently predominated, for who can behold the remains of ancient grandeur without respect? Who can behold the decay and decrepitude of greatness without a feeling of regret? Every reader has been accustomed to associate the noblest and most romantic qualities with the name of Spaniard. There was a time when the historian was proud to decorate his page with the records of their gallant achievements, and the poet kindled into enthusiasm when he contemplated their generous and chivalric spirit. Now their greatness has degenerated into inability; and it would be almost as difficult to find among them a single trace of the spirit of Gonsalvo or Cortes.

We visited the Cathedral, which is by far the most magnificent building I have ever seen. It is a very large edifice, supported by massy pillars, superbly ornamented. The exterior form of the building appears to be nearly square, but the inside of the chapel partakes of an oblong appearance. During the late invasion of Spain, Buonaparte is said to have taken several waggon loads of gold and silver from this church, and to have



despoiled it of some of its richest ornaments; it still, however, contains a number of fine specimens of painting and sculpture, and the decorations generally, of which there is still a profusion, are rich and tasty.

The altar is placed exactly in the centre, and the area round it is unincumbered with seats, so that the devotee is at liberty to saunter about, while he enjoys his devotional feelings. The whole is surrounded by a chain of arched recesses, at the back of each of which is an admirable representation of one of the saints, or of some scene from sacred history. The entrance to these is guarded by a light railing, which is passed by means of a small gate.

The immense size and gloominess of the building, the privacy of its recesses, and the manner in which they perform their devotions, are well-calculated to recall to the mind the tales of romance. We easily conceive that here the lover might pour out his soul to his mistress, or the assassin consult his vengeful employer. There were a number of devotees, principally females, kneeling before the images of our Saviour and of the different saints. Some of these were silently and assiduously employed in counting their beads. Some were praying in an audible voice, and some in indistinct murmurs. There are several small rooms or closets connected with the church, which are appropriated to confession. The door of one of them being open, I observed a priest, in the attitude of listening to the confession of a female penitent, who was kneeling beside him. I was immediately warned that it was improper and highly offensive to look

into the confessional. It was, however, too late, if there was any secret in the business, for I saw it all. The room was hung with black, in the middle was a large chair, and the priest sat thereon, and before the priest knelt the penitent, dressed in black. The priest leaned his head upon his hand and looked very wise, and the lady was talking to the priest. If I had looked a month I could have seen no more. During the day we met, in our walks, in almost every street, processions of monks, carrying crosses and images, and followed by crowds of people praying vociferously. Every one was obliged to bend to the Saint, and we did the same. When we were released for a moment from the din occasioned by these religious exercises, our ears were saluted by the rattling of dice and billiard balls in the adjacent houses. These and other games are played without concealment on Sundays as well as other days; and the houses of amusement being thrown open, you may see revelling on the one side you, and religion on the other.

The province of Granada is more celebrated than any other in the legends of love and chivalry, and the tales of austere Moors and blooming ladies. A few leagues from Malaga is the famous rock called the Lovers' Rock, which derives its name from an incident very far superior to the Leucadian leap of Sappho. A young knight was taken in battle by the Moorish King of Granada, and held in captivity. Possessed of an interesting person, amiable manners, and insinuating address, these qualities, added to his prowess, procured him the friendship of the King, who released him from slavery, made him his friend, and entertained him at his court. The Moor had an

only daughter, between whom and the gallant Spaniard a reciprocal affection arose—

“She loved him for the dangers he had passed,  
And he loved her that she did pity them.”

Being unable to conceal their tender meetings, they resolved upon quitting Granada, and uniting themselves to the Christians. They were soon pursued. The Moors, invigorated by hope and fear, had already overtaken and surrounded them, when the lovers, rushing into each other's arms and throwing themselves from the precipice, closed their sorrows and their lives together.

The Count and Di Salvo having arrived at this province, proceeded instantly to the house of the Count di Ravenna. He was at home, and they were introduced to him in his study.

The Count di Romano made known the purport of their visit, which was to inquire if Maria Teressi was still living in his family.

They were answered that she did; but was become very old and infirm—so much so that she was now scarcely able to do anything.

They now requested permission to see her, which request being granted, the bell was rang, and when the servant entered he was ordered to inform her that her presence was required in the study.

On the old woman entering the apartment she appeared much confused on perceiving the Count and Di Salvo; the latter approached her, and, with the Count di Ravenna's permission, requested she would be seated; he was then obliged to speak very loud to her, as she was

become almost deaf, and, indeed, to all appearance superannuated.

He, at length, so far succeeded as to make her understand that he wished some information relative to her late mistress, the Countess di Barretto; at the mention of whose name she started and gazed intently at him. She sighed deeply, and raised her hand in token of some painful recollections that seemed to pass over her mind, but remained silent.

The Count di Ravenna here observed that she could read well; and he thought that, whatever they might have to ask her, it would be better to write on paper.

Di Salvo instantly took pen and paper, and wrote the following, viz.—“Should she recollect the Countess di Barretto, her late mistress, whom she and the Dr. Henrique Belcour assisted to place in safety at the Convent Della Floriano; and should she like to see her?”

While she was perusing the contents of the paper, the colour alternately came and left her face. She was exceedingly agitated; so much so, that it was some minutes before she could utter a single sentence. At length, tears came to her relief, and she exclaimed, “Oh! Santa Maria! know her!—like to see her!—What would I not give to see that dear face once more!” She then sobbed aloud.

Di Salvo now made known to the Count the business which had brought them to his residence, and the necessity there was for Maria to accompany them to Naples. He most willingly acquiesced in the opinion that her testimony was not only necessary, but would place beyond

all doubt the identity of the Lady Heloisa with the Countess; as he had not the smallest doubt in his own mind but that, if she was introduced into a room where she was, she would instantly know and recognise her.

The Count now took upon himself to prepare her for the journey by saying, "We shall be sorry to part with you, my good Maria; but if you will consent to accompany these gentlemen, they will take you to see the Countess, your late mistress, before you die."

A smile of the most unfeigned joy instantly passed over her aged countenance, as she arose from her seat, and expressed her willingness to accompany them immediately.

She then left the room for the purpose of preparing to go with them, and they adjourned to another apartment to partake of some refreshment.

They were introduced to the Countess and her two lovely daughters, the Lady Ceceliana and her sister Edwina, both of whom expressed the sorrow they felt at the idea of losing their old faithful servant Maria. She had been with them from their infancy, and her fidelity and kindness to them had so strongly endeared her to all the family that, though she could do but little, they were grieved to part with her so long as she lived.

They, however, expressed a hope of seeing her again, as the Count di Ravenna said that business would station him at Naples for a few months in the following year, and he should have great pleasure in visiting the Palace Di Salvo, as also the Villa Altiere, where he understood the Countess di Barretto intended to reside; and he had an opinion that Maria would never leave the Countess again until death should separate them.

Maria now entered the saloon ready to accompany them. Tears filled each eye of the ladies at sight of her ; and the parting was really affecting.

She was placed in a hired calisse with the Count di Romano's and Di Salvo's servants, Bardo and Rollo, who seemed quite delighted to escort the old lady.

With every hope and wish expressed that they should meet again in the delightful city of Naples in the following spring, the carriages drove off at full speed, and they were soon out of sight of each other.



## CHAPTER XXXV.

The morning breaks—night's shadows flee away,  
But hope returns not with the dawning day :  
Hope comes not here to greet the morning's light ;  
And sorrow casts around the gloom of night.

On the arrival of Lady Carantani at the Villa di Montaldo, she was greeted with the most flattering reception from the Duchess, and welcomed by the Duke with a

faint smile of joy. She was forcibly struck with his altered appearance. He was become visibly much worse; and she had now an opportunity of witnessing the fast declining state of his health.

It was greatly feared by his physician that he would never live to return to Sicily, unless they commenced the journey speedily.

These thoughts seemed also to prey deeply upon the mind of the Duke, and he became daily worse and more dejected; and his agonised wife saw the last ray of hope which she had dared to cherish fade away for ever. In this distressing hour, how did the Duchess regret the absence and consoling friendship of her beloved friend and companion, the Lady Janetta Durazzo. However, in some measure to supply her place, she anticipated the society of the Lady Victoriana Carantani; and, on her arrival at the Villa, she felt the most unfeigned pleasure in the prospect of her consoling friendship, and the days now passed in mutual kindness and consoling endearment.

The Tuesday of the third week after the arrival of the Lady Victoriana, was fixed for the day of embarkation: until which day the Duchess received and paid her farewell visits to the few families they had become acquainted with since their arrival in Italy.

The most intimate acquaintance she had formed was the Baroness di Ferata and Miss Evelin. The latter was become so much attached to Lady Carantani, that they were almost inseparable; and most sincerely did they regret the hour of separation which was now so near. But, like the Baroness Ferata and the Duchess, they fondly



consoled themselves with the hope of shortly meeting again.

As the Baron had expressed his intention of visiting Sicily and Naples on his way to England, every preparation having been made, and the wind and weather being fair, the party got on board in good spirits on the morning appointed.

The Baron and Baroness, and Miss Evelin, with several other friends, accompanied the party on board. It was a lovely day, and the different groups of musicians, who were collected round the vessel, and who played some of their most lively national airs, increased the hilarity, and dissipated every painful idea that would otherwise have obtruded itself at parting.

The Duke seemed quite to revive at the idea of returning home, and appeared in good spirits during the whole day; but, as the party took leave and the evening approached, he seemed to relapse and feel the ill effects of the exertions he had made.

The Lady Victoriana and suite embarked in the same vessel, with the intention of remaining at the Palace, on her arrival in Sicily, until they were joined by the Lady Janetia Durazzo, who had promised to visit the Duchess on her return to Sicily.

The early part of the voyage was very favourable, the wind serving to second their wishes. All at once, however, a terrible storm arose, which every moment threatened destruction. The vessel was driven out of its course, and the pilot was compelled to take shelter in an unknown creek. He had scarcely entered it before the tempest broke over with the utmost fury. They were, however, so

cured from the storm; and the vessel saved, perhaps, from being dashed to pieces against the rocks.

As the morning dawned, and the storm had subsided, the atmosphere also had assumed a brighter aspect. The Captain began to look out to discover which course to pursue. Again they tempted the pathless sea, and the pilot soon discovered the proper course to steer the vessel.

When the party went on deck, after so unpleasant a night as the past, they were rejoiced to find the atmosphere tolerably clear, and felt, with hearts full of gratitude, the cheering influence of the morning sun; although the clouds, which were still slumbering on the sides of the surrounding horizon, excluded all sight of the luminary itself.

The air was perfectly at rest, and the vessel glided smoothly along the water, whose tranquil surface reflected most minutely the grandeur and magnificence of the clouds above, without the slightest wave to interrupt the beautiful and sublime reflection.

Soon, however, a quick gale of wind sprung up, and the fleet motion of the vessel partially disturbed the serenity of the sea. The noise and splashing of the waves against the ship, and the busy hum of voices, were sounds which gave life, as it were, to the scene.

The storm had occasioned the vessel to deviate but very little from its direct course. Fortunately, the voyage was not a long one; for, if it had been protracted, the Duke might not have been enabled to bear up against it. As it was, he did not feel so much fatigued as his anxious friends had feared he would.

Immediately on the arrival of the vessel in the harbour, which was early in the morning, boats were sent out to convey the passengers on shore. They were rowed to the nearest landing-place: and, on their arrival at an adjacent hotel, a good substantial breakfast was instantly ordered, which having plentifully partaken of, the party got into their different carriages, and drove off for Palermo.

For a month or six weeks after his return to his palace, the Duke continued seemingly better; but his complaint was too deeply rooted for him to continue long so, and he again relapsed into his former weak and dejected state. He could no longer bear the fatigue of his accustomed ride in the carriage, and became too ill to leave the Palace. All now was doubt and anxiety about him; and, when he became too ill to leave his room, the Duchess scarcely ever left him. No persuasions could induce her to quit him, even for a moment, unless when absolutely obliged; for she felt as though every moment of his life was too precious for her to pass it away from him.

The faithful, amiable Duchess Rosalie was the consolation and comforter to soothe her dying husband. But still, though anxious to do all in her power for him, she was too young and inexperienced to know all his wants. She had never watched by a sick bed, and learnt to anticipate the invalid's wants; still she could not feel satisfied to leave him to the care of a nurse, who could have neither attachment or affection to bind her to anticipate his wants and wishes, his comfort, or happiness, equal to her own.

She also feared she would not attend to him with all the care he needed. She could not bring herself to be

lieve that she was acting the part of an affectionate wife if she left him to the care of a stranger.

But not all the anxiety, care, or attentive kindness of the Duchess could preserve her husband; and the dreadful moment arrived when the sad truth was cautiously revealed to her that he slept in peace—that he was no more.

She heard the sad intelligence with more fortitude and calmness than her friends expected she would have done, and the satisfaction and consoling reflection that she had done all in her power to soothe and mitigate the anguish of the parting, dying hour—gave her the fortitude to bear with resignation her severe loss.

The last moments of the Duke were calm and resigned. He was perfectly collected and sensible to the last. He looked on his afflicted friends around him with a serenity which convinced them he had made his peace with his Maker, and now calmly awaited the summons to depart.

The Duchess knelt by his bed side: no word escaped her lips; but, in her heart, she offered up her prayers to her God, with her unconscious little one's hand clasped in her's.

The invalid was hourly—nay, even momentarily, expected to breathe his last. The physician, with the Lady Victoriana, and the Lady Janetta, (who had arrived the day before,) stood on one side the bed; the Count di Scangano and his daughter, the Duchess, with the little Ferdinand, on the other. At the foot of the bed stood the body-servant Francisco; and, at a distance, the nurse and other attendants.

Silence then for some minutes prevailed around them.

every heart was penetrated with awe at this solemn moment; even the little Ferdinando, though unconscious and too young to feel the severe loss he should so soon have to sustain, seemed awe-struck. The lips of the Duke moved, but they could bear no articulate sound, and it was evident his thoughts were engaged in silent prayer. At length he turned his eyes with a placid look on his wife and child, and then faintly requested they would raise him up. They did so. He tenderly laid his hands upon him, then, turning his eyes first upon his wife, and then upon his father and friends, "Protect! protect!" faintly murmured the dying penitent.

The Count seized his clay cold hand, and, pressing it to his lips, promised to obey his last injunctions.

The Duke seemed perfectly satisfied; his lips moved as if to thank them for all their kindness, but no word was heard, and he seemed perfectly calm and free from pain. His head sunk gently on his pillow, and he faintly breathed his last.

Scarcely could they persuade themselves that he was really dead, so calm—so tranquilly—so peacefully had his spirit quitted its frail tenement of clay. But when the physician announced his death, and communicated his departure from this world to his afflicted Duchess, she arose from her knees, and, taking the hand of her child, she gave an agonising look at her departed lord, and hastened to her own private apartment. There she relieved her almost bursting and overcharged heart, by giving free vent to her agonised feelings. Her tears were not tears of discontent, or murmurings at the all-wise dispensations of Providence, but of a sorrow which all

her fortitude could not restrain. Having relieved her mind in some little degree of a portion of the weight which pressed so heavily upon it, she consented to listen to the kind and consoling advice of her friends.

Their sympathy restored the Duchess to something like serenity; she insisted on visiting the remains of her husband—she pressed her trembling lips to the cold cheek of the inanimate clay which had so frequently given her the kiss of fond affection. She led her child to the coffin which contained his parent, and, while she told him that he was gone—that his spirit had left this world for ever—she endeavoured to direct his youthful ideas to his Father in Heaven, who has said, “If thou art good, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee!”

The Duke was buried with all the pomp usually attendant at the funeral of a Sicilian nobleman. The Duchess was not present at the funeral of her lord; her fortitude was equal to bear all the trial except that of witnessing his remains being consigned to the silent tomb; that she felt unequal to—nor did she know the exact hour when the procession left the great hall and proceeded to the chapel which contained the family vault. The scene was almost too much for the aged feelings of the good old Count di Scangaro, yet he exerted himself to see that the remains of the Duke were properly deposited in the silent tomb of his ancestors.

The Palace wore the aspect of deep sorrow and mourning for some length of time, for the Duke had ever been beloved by his subjects, and his loss was long and sincerely lamented by many.

After the remains of the Duke were consigned to the

silent grave, the Duchess yielded to the united entreaties of her friends, and left the apartment where she had so closely confined herself, and once more appeared among them.

But there appeared almost a settled melancholy to have taken possession of her mind, and for a length of time she continued in a very low, dejected state ; but the physician gave it as his opinion that this depression was partly occasioned by the long confinement she had experienced with the Duke during his illness, and that the consoling and friendly society around her would, in time, dispel the heavy gloom that hung upon her mind.

Lady Carantani consented to remain at the Palace until the Lady Janetia returned to Naples, when the Duchess had consented to accompany her, as the physician was of opinion that change of scene, as well as air, would greatly contribute to the recovery of her health and spirits.

Lady Victoriana had given her faithful promise to spend a few months the ensuing spring at her uncle's, the Count di Camira's, and as that delightful season of the year was fast approaching, every preparation was making for the journey.

The Count di Scangaro, from age and infirmity, declined accompanying them ; and the young Ferdinando was considered too young at present to visit, or undertake so long a journey. Proper attendants were, therefore, left with him and his grandfather, who had promised to watch over his welfare till the Duchess returned.

On the morning appointed, the little party, with their



attendants, embarked for Naples with a favourable wind, and upon the whole the voyage was a most delightful one.

On the arrival of the party in the Bay of Naples, they were soon hailed by their friends from the shore. The Marquis Durazzo's boat, and others, were quickly alongside the vessel. The pratique officer soon arrived with the permit, and then all were allowed to go on shore. The Marquis Durazzo, Lozaro di Gracio, and the Marquis di Dalmira were in the boats to escort the ladies on shore. They entered the carriages, which were in readiness to receive them, and drove off immediately to the Villa Pietro.

Every one appeared in excellent spirits; even the Duchess seemed to feel but little fatigue from the voyage, and partook of the friendly hospitality which reigned around her with better spirits than could have been expected.

The little Celestina, with some of the attendants, had been sent forward to the Count di Camira's, to inform them of their arrival at Naples, and after three weeks stay at the Villa Pietro, the hospitable mansion of the Marquis Durazzo, Lady Carantani hastened to pay her promised visit to her uncle's, at Villa Rosa.

Here she had frequent opportunities of meeting and conversing with the Marquis di Dalmira. The Count di Camira was in treaty with him for the purchase of a part of the property left by his grandfather, therefore business had frequently brought him to Villa Rosa; but now he had become a constant visitor. This lovely woman had made a deep impression upon his heart, when he

first saw her at his uncle's, at the Villa di Averno. It was not the dazzling whiteness of her complexion, or the brilliancy of her eyes, that engaged his admiration—lovely faces he was familiar with, and, indeed, always regarded them with pleasure and interest, as being the most perfect work of creation; but they had not made any impression on his heart. It was the lively, pleasing vivacity of her manners, and the nobleness of her mind, which gave such irresistible attraction to the lovely features of the Lady Victoriana Ceramini, and made the Marquis her most devoted admirer.

The frequent opportunities he now had of being in her society strengthened his passion, and, as he hung enraptured over her as she sat at the instrument, and played him some of the most enchanting airs, and accompanied them with her melodious voice, he felt he could only live but to adore her.

Swiftly flew these happy moments—these hours of delight—and as yet he had not dared to tell his tale of love; he was afraid he had a rival in the young Count di Cambray, his cousin. These thoughts agitated his soul to the most passionate extremes; and yet he did not perceive that she received any mark of attention from him with any particular expression of pleasure more than she did from him. One of the two he flattered himself that she at times had given him the preference; but her manner was so gracefully easy and familiar with all.

One evening, when the shades of darkness had begun to overspread the azure vault of heaven, and the moon had arisen in cloudless splendour, he hastened to the Count di Cambray, to enjoy the society of his lovely

mistress. He had entered the long avenue which led to the Villa, when, as he passed a narrow path, planted with the choicest shrubs and flowers, the sound of a lute struck upon his ear. He was soon convinced that it was the Lady Victoriana. He approached the spot from whence the sounds proceeded, and discovered her sitting under a beautiful magnolia tree. She was alone, and his heart dilated with the most indescribable sensations, as he leaned against one of the trees and listened with rapture to the charming notes which she drew from her lute. She ceased, and, casting her eyes upwards, she fixed them upon the beautiful orb of night, which shone full upon her lovely form. She was clad in robes of the purest white, and, as the Marquis gazed upon her, he fancied she really was one of the celestial beings descended to this lower world.

Again she struck the chords of her lute, and accompanied it with the following very impressive and beautiful lines :—

### TO PEACE.

Hail ! best of blessings here below,  
Sweet Peace, thou soother of our care !  
From thee our surest comforts flow,  
Thy presence shields us from despair.

Say, dost thou seek the lonely bower,  
Where village hinds retire from toil ?  
Or dost thou dwell with rank and power,  
And rest thee on the courtier's smile ?

Or dost thou fly from gilded state,  
And shun the glare of vain parade,  
To dwell with those whose better fate  
Has placed them in the tranquil shade ?

From Poverty's uneven road,  
Too oft thy footsteps turn aside ;  
Nor is the Palace thy abode,  
For there dwell Luxury and Pride.

Yet ah ! forgive, celestial Maid,  
The wrong I offer to thy name ;  
Thy smile at once adorns the shade,  
And fills the highest post of Fame.

Nor lonely cot, nor lofty dome,  
Can claim thee, as its owner's guest,  
Unless the quiet happy home,  
Thy sister, *Innocence*, has blest.

Where she resides, thy home is there ;  
The virtuous heart thy regal throne--  
Thine here, thou wouldst thy crown  
Whence'st in God, and God alone.

Having finished the air, she arose from her mossy seat and was proceeding down the path, when the Marquis discovered himself. At first she was startled at his appearance ; but, soon recovering herself, she gave him her hand, which, pressing to his lips, he slowly led her towards the Villa.

" And is the heart of Lady Carantini so happy--so peaceful ?" said the Marquis, " I wish I could boast of so much happiness."

" Few, perhaps, so young, have had more severe trials," observed her Ladyship, " yet I have endeavoured with fortitude and resignation to bear up against them, ever considering them as the all-wise dispensations of Providence, against whom it is impious to murmur."

" Such exalted virtue is sure to meet with its reward," replied the Marquis, " and the happy serenity displayed by Lady Carantini proves the truth of the remark."

Before they reached the Villa, the Marquis told his tale of love, and urged his suit with such success, that the answers he received were expressive of that candour which disdains affectation, and she declared herself honoured by the preference he had evinced for her.

They now entered the house, and were met by the Count, who rallied them on their long stay—he was alone in the saloon—and passed many other sly remarks on their so fortunately meeting each other for an evening walk.

The Marquis took the opportunity, while Lady Carantani left the room to seek her aunt, to inform him that he had made an offer of himself and fortune to his niece, and had met with the most unequivocal and flattering returns of approbation and esteem.

The Count expressed the gratification such intelligence was calculated to impart, and assured his Lordship that the greatest happiness he could experience, next to that of his own child, was that of seeing his niece, the Lady Lady Victoriana Carantani, under his honourable protection.

The Lady Carantani had flown up-stairs to her beloved aunt, and, throwing her white arms around her neck, she told the events of the evening to the Countess, who returning her embrace, expressed the pleasure she felt at such intelligence, and sincerely wished her every happiness she could enjoy in this life.

They now descended to the saloon, when the Count arose from his seat, and, taking the hand of his niece, he led her to the Marquis, and placing her hand in his, he

said. "Take her, and may you be happy as you deserve!"

Tears filled both the eyes of himself and the Countess at the recollection of past sorrow; but, wiping away the falling drops, they endeavoured to partake of the present happiness.

The Count had fondly hoped that his only son would have formed an alliance with his niece; but Valmot had formed an attachment with the Lady Blanch, daughter of the Count di Rovigno, where he was then visiting.

The little Celestina was idolised by her affectionate aunt; the Marquis di Dalmira was also exceedingly fond of her, and frequent little altercations arose between them which should have the future care of her, or love her most.

It was the wish of the Marquis and Lady Carantani that she should return to Italy with them, to which proposal the Countess never would listen, but declared that she could never part with her.

The Count one day interfered in the business by saying, "You shall none of you be separated for the present. I am expecting to hear by the next packet that arrives from Italy when I may expect to see the Marquis Carantani, whom I have every reason to believe will pay me a visit on his way to England."

"My uncle visit England?" exclaimed the Marquis.

"Yes," returned the Count; "I understand the old gentleman is growing quite young again; besides, I shall hope to have the pleasure of seeing your sister, the Lady Luchinetta, who, I am also informed, will accompany your uncle and an English gentleman, who has been residing with him for some time."

Lady Carantani soon gave her uncle an account of the stranger's visit to the Villa Averno, and expressed it as her opinion that there would be a wedding also announced when the packet arrived.

The Marquis now said that it would give him infinite pleasure to see his beloved sister united to so amiable and worthy a man as Mr. Montfort, as he had not the smallest doubt but that her future comfort and happiness would be certain, as far as it was in his power to make it so.

The servant now entered with cards of invitation for the party to meet at the Marquis Durazzo's on the morrow ; and the Marquis di Dalmira took his leave, promising to be there at an early hour on the following morning to escort them to the Villa Pietro.



## CHAPTER XXXVI.

When round the heart affection's tie  
Too close is bound for Time to free,  
How oft is heard the pautul sigh,  
Relentless power, at thought of thee !

Then lay thy cruel arts aside,  
Since vain and impotent they be;  
No more the fatal pair divide,  
Nor longer part my friend and me !

When the Count di Romano and Di Salvo left the Count di Ravenna's, the carriages moved with the greatest velocity until they arrived at the port Almeria. Unfortunately, there was not a vessel bound either for Naples or Florence that evening. They were obliged, therefore, to take up their abode at an hotel till the next day.

Di Salvo gave Maria into the care of the hostess ; and, feeling much fatigued, they ordered a slight repast, which having partaken of, they retired to rest.

Early on the following morning they arose and walked down to the Custom-house to make inquiry what vessels

were to sail that day, and were informed the first packet would sail for Florence at seven o'clock; and there was another, bound for Naples, which would sail at six, the wind proving favourable. As they must be guided by the weather, they did not then engage their passage, but returned to the hotel to breakfast.

Di Salvo now went to inquire after Maria. He found her sitting at breakfast with the landlady, and informed her that, if the wind permitted, they should set sail that evening at seven o'clock, in the packet bound for Florence.

The old lady appeared greatly distressed at the idea of again encountering the stormy sea. She had not forgotten her voyage from Florence, (which had been a most dreadful stormy one,) and declared she never could have consented to accompany them, had she known they wished to convey her to that city again.

Di Salvo, and the landlady also, endeavoured to cheer up her spirits by observing that the weather was most delightful, and there was every prospect of a pleasant, speedy voyage.

"Ah! Santa Maria," exclaimed the old lady, "that may all be very true; but it is the hope of seeing the Countess di Barretto—my dear, dearly-loved mistress—once again; or, indeed, I assure you I would not, for all the world besides, go with you—not even now."

"Who does she say—the Countess di Barretto?" exclaimed the landlady, turning pale as death. "And," looking steadfastly at Maria, "who are you?—See the Countess di Barretto!" she again repeated. "Santa Ma-

nia! she has been dead (God rest her angelic spirit!, these many years."

The landlady had spoken loud enough for Maria to hear the latter part of the sentence, when, looking up earnestly in her face, she said, "Ah! it was a cruel, barbarous deed; and a most melancholy, fatal end they made of it."

"But she did not die," continued Maria, still gazing at the landlady, who was also steadfastly regarding the old lady as she spoke. "But surely," said Maria, "I know something of that face. Is it Clari Lucia?" said she.

"It is," exclaimed the landlady; and you are Maria Taressi, then," throwing her arms round the neck of the old lady. "And are you still alive?—and is it my dear, dear Maria that I embrace?"

Maria now perfectly recollected her, and recognised her faithful friend and fellow-servant, Clari Lucia. Again they embraced each other with tears of the most unfeigned joy.

Di Salvo, who had stood gazing at them in the greatest astonishment, now enquired if the landlady also knew the Countess di Banetto.

"Know her?" said she; "she was the most angelic, loveliest of women I ever did know. But, ah! Santa Maria, she is gone! We shall never see her like again, unless her lovely daughter is still alive, and should resemble her angel mother. But, as Maria says, it was a barbarous deed, truly, and the villain."

"But she did not die," interrupted Maria: "you were all deceived. She was conveyed to a place of safety; and I thought I should never have been myself again after I

was separated from her, for the separation was worse than if she had been quite dead."

Di Salvo listened with the most eager attention to all she said; and both himself and the landlady asked at the same moment what did become of her mistress.

Maria now looked at Di Salvo, and said, "You have told me that if I will go with you I shall see her. If so, you will then know all about it."

The landlady now interrupted them, by saying, "And does she still live? And is her lovely daughter, the little Amanda, still living also?"

"I believe they are," replied Di Salvo; "that is what I want to prove."

"You must know, Signor, it was for the purpose of taking care of the two children that I was engaged to live with the Countess di Barretto; but when they lost their mamma, and the Signora, their aunt, my dear lady's sister took the charge of them, I was dismissed, and her own servant, Annetta, took the care of them. But I used often to see the Lady Amanda, as I lived in a family very near to them; but, after the death of the youngest of the girls, the Signora Marietta went to reside at a new villa she had purchased a long way off, and I have never seen or heard anything of them since."

"Then you are certain it was the youngest that died," said Di Salvo.

"To be sure I am," said she; "for I helped to lay the little angel in its coffin, and saw it buried—God rest its little soul!"

"How old was it?" enquired Di Salvo.

"Two years and three weeks. Her name was Marietta.

after her aunt; and her sister's name is Amanda Heloisa. She was nearly five years old when last I saw her."

"Should you know her," enquired Di Salvo, "if you were to see her?"

"Ah! Santa Maria, most certainly I should; for, if there was nothing else to make me remember her, I shall never forget the sad accident which caused that scar on her forehead, just above her temple, and which had nearly cost her life. I watched over her day and night, until it was quite well."

Di Salvo now recollected that, when supporting her almost lifeless form in the garden at Della Martino, he had, in removing the beautiful tresses from her forehead to endeavour to revive her, seen a long scar very near her temple; and he had now not the smallest doubt remaining, but that the joint testimony of Maria and her newly-discovered friend and fellow-servant, Clari Lucia, (now the wife of Giovanni Gartello, would be quite sufficient to substantiate the claims of the Countess and her daughter, the Lady Amanda.

The Count di Romano, wondering at his long stay, now entered the room in search of Di Salvo, and was soon informed of the circumstance that had detained him. He was of opinion that it would be absolutely necessary for the landlady to accompany them to Naples.

Di Salvo now briefly related the purport of their visit to that country which was to find Maria; and, as the landlady had discovered herself to be so fully acquainted with almost every particular requisite to prove the Lady Heloisa to be the Countess di Barretto and her late mistress, as also the more important truth that she could most

unquestionably prove the Lady Amanda to be her daughter by her first husband, the Count di Ferando di Barretto, they must request that she would consent to accompany them to Naples.

Clari (as we will now call her) expressed her willingness, with her husband's consent. "But," said she, "do you really feel sure it is the Countess—my late mistress—that I shall see if I go with you?"

Di Salvo replied that the Lady Heloisa, from the convent Della Floriana, had solemnly declared herself to be the Countess di Barretto, and sister to the Signora Marietta at the Villa Altiere, near Naples; and it was to prove the Lady Amanda to be her daughter that her testimony would be absolutely required.

Di Salvo now asked Maria to what convent it was the Countess had retired.

"Ah! Santa Maria," she exclaimed, "it was within the peaceful walls of Santa della Floriana that she retired from this world for ever."

"Then you shall both see her again," said Di Salvo, "on your arrival at Naples."

The landlord now entered the room, and the Count di Romano, having informed him of the particulars just related, obtained his hearty consent for his wife to accompany them to Naples. "But," said he, "she will not be ready to embark with you in the vessel that sails to-day."

"But," said Di Salvo, "there is one bound for Florence, which sails at seven."

"Yes, to be sure there is," said Giovanni; "and the Captain will be here shortly. I have just left him yonder, in Strada Realli."

They now re-entered the breakfast room, and before they had finished the repast the Captain was introduced to them, and every arrangement made for their going on board at six o'clock.

Maria was greatly relieved from a portion of her fears at going on board, by having her friend Clari with her for a companion during the voyage: and many times during the day did they express the unfeigned joy they felt at the prospect of once more seeing their beloved mistress, and the Lady Amanda.

To amuse and pass the time, the Count and Di Salvo visited the different places of amusement and public rooms worth seeing. At one of the public rooms they entered, Di Salvo was struck with a full length marble figure, standing in one corner of the room. On inquiring who it was meant to represent, a gentleman near said it was the Abbé de Vatterville; and on several questions being asked relative to him, the same gentleman replied: "The character and adventures of the Abbé di Vatterville are singular, but are little known. He was brother to Baron Vatterville, once ambassador at the court of London. The Abbé, when colonel of the regiment of Burgundy, in the service of Phillip IV. of Spain, evinced his courage by repeated actions of éclat. Chagrined, however, with neglect of promotion, he resigned his commission, and retired into the Convent of Carthusians, at Besançon. As his restless spirit could ill-brook the gloom and silence of a cloister, he appointed a confidential friend to wait for him, with a horse, without the garden wall, and secretly procured of his relations some money, a riding dress, a case of pistols, and a sword. Thus equipped



he stole, during the night, from his cell into the garden, stabbed the prior, whom he met on his way, scrambled over the wall, and rode off at full speed. When his horse could advance no further, from fatigue and hunger, he then alighted at an obscure inn, ordered all the meat in the house to be cooked and instantly got ready, and sat down to his dinner with the utmost composure. A traveller, who arrived a few minutes later, politely requested that he might be allowed to share the repast with him. Vatterville rudely refused, alleging that there was little enough for himself, and, impatient of contradiction, he killed the gentleman on the spot with one pistol, and, presenting the other to the landlady and waiter, swore he would blow out their brains, if they once dared to interrupt his repast. They instantly left the room, and no one durst speak to him while he remained there. When he had dined he took his leave.

“ Having thus escaped with impunity, he encountered various fortunes. He landed, at length, in Turkey, assumed the turban, received a commission in the army, was raised to the rank of bashaw, and nominated to the government of certain districts in the Morea.

“ But, longing to revisit his native country, he entered into a secret correspondence with the Venetians, then at war with the Turks, obtained absolution, along with a considerable church living in Franche Comte, delivered the towns and forts under his command into the hands of the enemy, and was actually presented, by Louis XIV. to the vacant see of Besançon.

“ The Pope, however, who had granted absolution, refused the bull, and Vatterville was obliged to content

himself with the first deanery and two rich abbeys. In the midst of his magnificence, he sometimes deigned to call upon his old friends, the Carthusians, and at last expired quietly in his bed, at the advanced age of ninety. If one of the lower class had been guilty of one half of his enormities, he would have been broken on the wheel."

The Count and Di Salvo politely thanked the gentleman who had favoured them with this account of Vatterville, when, having passed a few remarks on the subject, they proceeded to admire some of the other pictures.

"That," said the same gentleman, (pointing to a most interesting looking figure near them,) "is a very different character to the one I have just been relating to you."

The Count di Romano said, "if it would not be asking too great a favour, they should much like to know who it was, and to hear a few particulars relative to his character."

The stranger, in the most polite and pleasing manner, replied, "That is Farinelli; and, I believe there are few persons of musical taste who have not heard of, though none are living to remember, the wonderful abilities of Farinelli, as a singer. The goodness of his heart, and the natural sweetness of his disposition, were not exceeded even by the unrivalled excellence of his vocal powers. It has been often related, and generally believed, that Phillip the First of Spain, being seized with a total disposition of spirit, absolutely refused to be obeyed, and was, in other respects, incapable of transacting affairs of State. The Queen, who had, in vain, tried every common expedient that was likely to contribute towards his

recovery, determined that an experiment should be made of the effects of music upon the King, her husband, who was extremely sensible of its charms. Upon the arrival of Farinelli, of whose extraordinary performance an account had been transmitted to Madrid, her Majesty contrived that there should be a concert in a room adjoining to the King's apartment, in which the singer executed one of his most captivating songs. Phillip at first appeared surprised, then affected, and at the conclusion of the second air, commanded the attendance of Farinelli. On his entering the royal apartment, the enraptured monarch overwhelmed him with compliments and caresses, and demanded how he could sufficiently reward such talents, declaring that he would refuse him nothing. Farinelli, previously instructed, only entreated that his Majesty would permit his attendants to shave and dress him; and that he would endeavour to appear in council as usual. From this moment the King's disease submitted to medicine, and the singer had the whole honour of the cure. By singing to the King every evening, his favour increased to such a degree, that he was regarded as Prime Minister; but what is still more extraordinary, and most indicative of a superior mind, Farinelli, never forgetting that he was only a musician, behaved to the Spanish nobles, attendant upon the court, with such unaffected humility and propriety that, instead of envying his good fortune, they honoured him with their esteem and confidence. The true nobility of this extraordinary person's soul appears in the following rare instance of his magnanimity:—going one day to the King's closet, to which he had at all times access, he heard an officer of the

guard curse him, and say to another, who was in waiting, 'Honours can be heaped on such scoundrels as these, while a poor soldier like myself, after thirty years' service, is unnoticed.' Farinelli, without seeming to hear this reproach, complained to the King that he had neglected an old servant, and actually procured a regiment for the person who had spoken so harshly of him in the anti-chamber; and on quitting his Majesty he gave the commission to 'the officer, telling him that he had heard him complain of having served thirty years, but added, 'You did wrong to accuse the King of neglecting to reward your services.'

"The following story, also, of a more ludicrous cast, was frequently told and believed at Madrid during the first year of Farinelli's residence in Spain:—This singer having ordered a superb suit of clothes for a gala at court, when the tailor brought them home he asked for his bill. 'I have made no bill, Sir,' said the tailor, 'nor ever shall make one. Instead of money, I have a favour to beg. I know that what I want is inestimable, and only fit for monarchs; but, since I have had the honour to work for a person of whom every one speaks with such rapture, all the payment I shall ever require will be a song.' Farinelli tried in vain to prevail on the tailor to take his money. At length, after a long debate, giving way to the earnest entreaties of this humble tradesman, and perhaps more highly gratified by the singularity of the adventure than by all the applause which he had hitherto received, he took him into his music room, and sung to him some of his most brilliant airs, delighted with the astonishment of his ravished hearer, and the more he seemed

surprised and affected, the more Farinelli exerted himself in every species of excellence. When he had concluded, the tailor, overcome with extasy, thanked him in the most rapturous and grateful manner, and prepared to retire. ‘No!’ said Farinelli, ‘I am a little proud; and it is, perhaps, from that circumstance that I have acquired some little degree of superiority over other singers. I have given in to your weakness: it is but fair that, in your turn, you should give way to mine.’ Then taking out his purse, he insisted on his receiving a sum amounting to nearly double the worth of the suit of clothes.’

“Farinelli, during two reigns, resided upwards of twenty years at the Spanish court with a continued increase of royal favour, and the esteem of the principal nobility of the kingdom.”

The Count and Di Salvo expressed their thanks to the gentleman who had thus so pleasingly entertained and gratified them with the history of these two noted characters, and would have felt great pleasure in listening to the account of many more celebrated personages, would time have permitted.

They now left the room; and, as they gently proceeded towards the inn by the way of the Almeida, the Count di Romano observed, “It was pleasing to frequent any of the public places in that country, for you were sure to meet with some polite individual who could give every information required. For,” said he, “of all the passions which take up their abode in the human breast, there is none, perhaps, of so general, and, indeed, almost universal, a character, as the desire the people of this country have of distinction. All classes, in a greater or less degree, are af-

feeted by it. Neither is the peasant, humble as the sphere is in which he moves, less ambitious, analogously speaking, of distinction and excellence in his pursuits among his equals in life than the monarch, who is, perhaps, arrived at the highest stage of human glory, though princes be his compeers, and the sway of kingdoms the object of his ambition. In every department of life there is a first part to act: in each, men, for the most part, are desirous of supporting a principal character; and, as the Roman moralist has elegantly and correctly said—

‘Alike the ignoble and the noble claim  
Distinction’s meed, and mount the car of fame.’

However, in the former it is often a virtue, and productive of the most salutary effects; while, in the latter, it becomes as often a vice fraught with every ill, and attended by the most pernicious consequences. If, however, we contemplate this affection in its fairer light, we shall find that it makes no unreasonable nor inconsiderable claims on the widely-extended sway which it bears among mankind, and that it possesses characteristics in an eminent degree worthy of the moralist’s commendation. Man is gifted with passions, by the proper use and direction of which, and not by extinguishing them, he will become worthy of the reward of virtue. These he has it in his power to improve, and to make the instruments of many a laudable action; and, while philosophy will teach him to curb their impetuosity and to check their extravagant sallies, he may yet, with proper management and reason for his guide, encourage an ardent feeling, nor consign those passions over to a brutal apathy since distinction is

to be sought and excellence attained in that faculty which forms the peculiar and appropriate characteristic of a subject; that property in man being the gift and exercise of reason. It is this desire of distinction which calls forth the latent powers of the soul—which gives zeal to the indifferent, animation to the dull, and energy to the inactive. It is, moreover, not disdained by the wisest of mankind, nor disapproved by the most serious, thinking, and dignified characters. In fine, it is this which gives birth to human excellence. Hence has history recorded a Spartan Leonidas—hence a Roman Decius. With them, not to be distinguished was to be abased; and the death of devoted patriotism was to live for ever in the memory—for ever to survive in the love and admiration of posterity. Such, then, is the nature, such are the effects, of a laudable desire of distinction; though, as moderation is seldom to be met with in the appetites and passions of men, so do we find that what might be cherished as an equally manly and refined quality, is too often made the gross incitement to the blackest actions, and alike disgraceful as fatal to its possessor. Let it, however, not be abused; and, instead of disgracing, it will adorn human nature: and, while the stoic's frown and the malignant sneer of the cynic may co-operate with the senseless and indifferent, the modestly-aspiring genius may be assured that he will always possess a strong ally and support in the discreet and valuable applause of a more exalted, more refined, more social, more human philosophy."

Di Salvo was listening with the most profound attention to the sage remarks of the Count, when they were joined by the Captain of the vessel, who had been amus-



ing himself with a walk on the Almeida. They now returned to the hotel to dine.

At three o'clock the Captain took his leave, and the Count and di Salvo promised to be on board at four o'clock.

Di Salvo now went in search of Maria and Clari, he found them busily employed in making every preparation to be on board by the time the Captain had named he wished them to embark.

The noddy being brought to the door, the luggage was placed in it and conveyed to the boat; the party also walked down to the steps, where they all got into their boats, and by five o'clock they were all safe on board. The vessel was fitted up very comfortably, and the best cabin was even elegant.

The wind was rather high, and in less than two hours the vessel left the harbour and was out at sea some considerable distance from land. She moved majestically through the sparkling waves with every prospect of a speedy, pleasant voyage. Long before dusk she was almost out of sight of land.

We must now leave her to pursue her way through the pathless waters, with the hope that she will arrive at her destined port in safety.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

Oh ! thou that with a friendly hand,  
Dost dry the tear from sorrow's eye,  
And soothe despair with accents bland,  
And bid the mourner cease to sigh—

She sees that though resolved to bless,  
Thou wouldst the noble deed disown ;  
And, whilst thou giv'st the wished success,  
Impute it to desert alone.

Benevolence ! meek Nature's child !  
Thy silent step delights to stray  
Where the pale cheek or aspect wild  
Would scare Indifference away.

It will be recollected that we mentioned in a former chapter a most friendly and interesting family, that of the Baron di Ferata, with whom the Duke and Duchess of Castelamore had become acquainted during their abode at the Villa di Montaldo, in Italy, as also that the Baroness had under her protection a young and lovely female of the name of Evelin. Some few years prior to this intimacy, an English gentleman, of the name of Evelin,

had visited Italy for the benefit of his health, accompanied by his only daughter, then about fifteen years old. They had taken up their abode at the Villa di Ferata, where every kind and soothing attention, that two benevolent hearts could confer, was bestowed upon the invalid for his comfort and happiness ; but all their tenderness and feeling attention to promote his recovery was of no avail, he gradually grew worse and died, leaving his only child an orphan in a foreign land. Happily for this interesting girl, she was consigned to the kind and protecting care of those whose hearts were too feeling and benevolent to abuse the trust and confidence reposed in them.

On Mr. Evelin's first arrival in Italy, he had taken apartments near to the Baron di Ferata's, to whom he had brought letters of introduction. That nobleman had earnestly solicited him to reside entirely with him. Mr. Evelin was, however, unwilling to intrude so far on his hospitality, and preferred living near to his friend's house.

As often as his health would permit, he visited the Baron ; but, from the time he had landed on a foreign shore, he felt himself daily grow weaker, and became conscious that he should never live to return to his native land. The thought also obtruded itself, that, whenever it should please his Maker to summon him from this world of woe, his child must be in a peculiarly destitute situation, unless placed under the care of a friend able and willing to protect her. Mr. Evelin was no stranger to the honourable character of the Baron and his amiable Lady ; and Juliette Evelin soon became attached herself to the Baroness. Their only child, a son, who was then

in England, and of whom his parents seemed remarkably fond, was, in a short time, expected home. The Baroness was charmed with the open and amiable disposition of Miss Evelin, and as she feared there was no hopes of her father ever recovering to return home, she determined to act the part of a mother to the defenceless orphan, who would otherwise be left entirely to the protection of strangers. This was the idea that preyed most painfully on Mr. Evelin's mind, and he sincerely wished he had left his daughter in England, instead of yielding to her entreaties and permitting her to accompany him to Italy. He now most ardently wished to engage the Baroness's protection for her, but this was so delicate a point that, much as he wished to name it, he still scrupulously avoided saying anything which might appear a hint that such an idea had ever entered his head.

Juliette Evelin was one of nature's loveliest forms—a fine clear complexion, her eye light and sparkling, yet expressive of any emotion that actuated her mind; her hair hung in beautiful curls round her lovely face, which was rather inclined to the Grecian cast; she was not over tall, and nothing could excel the grace and elegance of her whole figure—gentle and mild in her disposition, her sweet smile of sensibility went immediately to the heart, and those who had once had the pleasure of knowing and conversing with her, could never forget her.

It was the painful idea, then, of what might be the fate of his lovely child when he was dead, that lay so heavy at the heart of her unhappy parent. While these

thoughts were preying on the mind of Mr. Evelin, he became visibly worse, and his afflicted daughter perceived but too plainly that all the physician's advice, or change of climate, was unavailing, his complaint was too deeply rooted ever to recover. When he felt too ill to leave the house, she would sit beside him and read, or talk to him upon the topic which seemed most to please him; no persuasion could induce her to leave him, except it was at his earnest request that she would walk in the garden for a short period, as he was fearful too close confinement might injure her health. At other times they would ride out in the carriage together. Indeed, she was his sole comforter; and he saw she was but too painfully yet resignedly prepared for the loss she was about to sustain.

Her amiable conduct through life had been always most exemplary, and since his illness he had never heard a murmur escape her lips at the dispensations of Providence, or word that needed reproof; her whole time and thoughts were occupied in soothing the anguish and administering to the comfort and happiness of her dying parent. She seemed as if every moment of his life was too precious for her to pass it away from him. But still Juliette, though anxious to do all in her power for her beloved parent, was too young and inexperienced to know all his wants, she was, therefore, obliged to submit to his having a proper person to attend him. Still she could not feel satisfied unless she saw that all his wants and wishes were carefully attended to.

"Oh!" she would frequently exclaim, "how much I

wish I was older, I should then know how to administer to every want, even before he named it!"

But to Juliette's joy, the Baron di Ferata no sooner heard how much worse Mr. Evelin was, than he personally visited him, and again entreated that he would take up his abode at the Villa. This he gratefully declined, but said he would visit them as long as he was able to leave the house.

In a day or two he felt rather better, and the Baron sent his carriage for him and Juliette to spend the day. Mr. Evelin appeared somewhat better, and on his arrival at the Villa expressed how much he felt himself revived by the ride. He partook of a much more hearty dinner, (comparatively speaking,) than he had done for a long time.

After the repast he sat reclining on a couch near the window of the saloon, which looked into the beautiful gardens which surrounded the house; he was admiring the elegance and taste with which the grounds were laid out, when suddenly he was seized with a violent fit of coughing, and it was soon discovered that he had broken a blood-vessel.

His medical attendant was immediately sent for, who, on his arrival, declared it as his opinion that to remove him would be instant death. He was able to administer some little relief to the patient, but said a short period would decide his complaint.

The Baron now gave orders for an apartment to be instantly prepared for him; four of the domestics then gently carried and laid him on the bed. The Baroness

and Juliette now watched by his bed-side, and took care that there should be no comfort that he did not possess. Conduct such as this excited in the breast of Mr. Evelin and his daughter feelings of the purest gratitude; and Juliette felt, that to the latest period of her existence, she should love and reverence such unexampled benevolence and kindness to her dear father. But not all the anxiety and tender filial care of his daughter, or the benevolent kindness of his friends, could either lengthen or preserve the life of Mr. Evelin, and the truth was cautiously revealed to Juliette, that her father would not survive until another day.

She heard the information with fear, and tremblingly exclaimed, "Ah! my God, what will become of me when he is gone!" Yet she evinced more fortitude than the Baroness expected from a girl who had not yet completed her sixteenth year. But Juliette Evelin had very early in life been taught by an amiable mother, who had implanted in her infant mind the purest principles of religion; and, even at this distressing moment, as she knelt in tearful silence at the bed-side of her only parent, who would so soon be no more, she inwardly besought the protection of him who has promised to be a father to the fatherless, and exclaimed, though not without a sigh, "Thy will be done!"

The Baron and his lady stood by the dying bed of Edward Evelin; the Baroness supported the weeping Juliette. The physician said life was ebbing fast—every heart was struck with awe at this solemn moment. Mr. Evelin motioned as if to request them to raise him a little—they did so. He fixed his eyes tenderly upon his



daughter, then anxiously sought those of his friends ; he gently moved his hand towards his child ; she took hold of it—pressed it, clay cold as it was, to her lips—she looked tenderly at him as she leaned forward to take a last embrace. “Take her—cherish—protect her,” he would have added, but the last sentence died away upon his quivering lips, as he placed the hand of Juliette in that of the Baroness. She pressed the hand to her heart as she received it, saying, “I will, indeed, protect her. She shall be as dear to me as my own.”

Mr. Evelin gave her a faint smile of approbation and satisfaction ; his lips moved as if to thank them for all their benevolent kindness, but no articulate sound escaped them. A dead silence now pervaded the apartment—they all knelt by the bed side. The Baron took the hand of his dying friend as he said, “Be assured I will be a father and a friend to your child ; I, also, will protect her.”

A peaceful smile overspread the features of Evelin as his head sunk on the pillow, and he closed his eyes for ever. His last moments were so calm—so resigned—that some time elapsed ere they could persuade themselves that he was really dead—that his spirit had quitted its frail tenement of clay to join the just made perfect in the mansions of eternal bliss.

The Baroness, as she sorrowfully announced his departure to the weeping Juliette, led her from the apartment, and, by every tender and soothing epithet, endeavoured to alleviate the sorrow which she could not restrain. She allowed her at first to give free vent to her tears to ease her almost bursting heart.

The kind consolations of the Baroness restored the feelings of Juliette to something like serenity; she tenderly embraced her, saying, "I will be to you a parent, and, as far as I am able, supply the place of the one you have now lost."

Juliette threw herself into the arms of the Baroness, exclaiming, "Gratitude, my dear madam, shall dry these tears, for your unexampled goodness!"

She now hastened to her own private apartment, where, unrestrained, she gave free vent to her tears, which greatly relieved her almost bursting heart. Then, falling on her knees, she offered up the most fervent prayer for resignation and gratitude to that Almighty Providence who had raised her up such benign, such able, and exemplary friends and protectors.

On the Baroness entering her apartment she expressed the pleasure it gave her to perceive so much resignation and serenity pervade the mind of Juliette, who replied, "I should not only be unworthy, my dear madam, of your kindness and protection, but ungrateful to that all-wise and beneficent Providence who has raised me up such friends, if I did not exert myself to acquire serenity and resignation to His divine will. Has he not said 'if thou wilt put thy trust in me I will never leave thee nor forsake thee?'"

The Baroness tenderly embraced her, and they descended to the saloon, where they were met by the Baron. He told her that he had given orders for the interment of the remains of her father in the Chapel of the Convent of San Paulo, and should himself attend the ceremony. Tears again started to the eyes of Juliette, at the mention

of that beloved parent, but the kind and consoling accents of her friends partially dissipated her grief. Soon after the remains of Mr. Evelin were consigned to the silent grave, the Baroness delicately expressed her wish that Juliette should now finally arrange to take up her abode at the Villa, as her future home; "for though not legally appointed so," said this good lady, "we consider ourselves as your future guardians. The promise we made to your dying parent we consider as binding; and, as to any objections which you may have to residing in a foreign land, those may be speedily removed. My son having been educated in England has given him a desire to reside in that happy island. You know, also, that I am an Englishwoman, and have many friends there. The Baron, having no particular tie to bind him to Italy, is resolved to fix his future residence in England, and we only wait Gonsalvo's arrival ere we make arrangements to bid a final adieu to this country."

Juliette could only reply by tears, for her heart was full. But she inwardly prayed for a blessing on the head of her kind friends. In a few days, therefore, Juliette was established as one of the family of the Baron di Ferata, and was treated by them with that delicate kindness which her situation seemed so peculiarly to call for.

She had been there almost twelve months when Gonsalvo di Ferata returned home. He was a tall, handsome young man, of nearly twenty years of age; and in his fine, open, expressive features Juliette fancied she could read the same amiable disposition as that which distinguished his father. His parents, in their letters, had mentioned the young orphan who was under their care in

terms which had excited a disposition to friendship and esteem in the breast of the young Ferata towards the amiable orphan ; and his attentive politeness and conciliating manners quickly prepossessed her in his favour. Gonsalvo paid her particular attention, and was most assiduous and kind in endeavouring to dissipate the cloud of sadness, which, in spite of her every effort, would overspread the lovely features of Juliette whenever he mentioned the name of England ; and, indeed, every day she received some new token of affection from the Baroness, which increased the debt of gratitude which she owed to this amiable and benevolent family.

“ When do you intend to leave Italy, my dear father ? ” inquired his son one evening as they were all assembled together.

“ In a very short time,” replied the Baron. “ My affairs are all settled, and I am only waiting for your mother to consent to our quitting the abode. Perhaps, my dear Gonsalvo, we shall not meet with a more peaceful, happy residence than this has been. But I have not disposed of this part of my property ; so that, if at any future period you may wish to return to your native country, you will still have this delightful spot to come to.”

The Baroness gave him a look of tenderness for his kind solicitude on their account, and then they talked further of their removal to England.

“ But,” observed the Baron, “ we have given our promise to sail by way of Naples and Sicily. Which country shall we visit first ? ”

Juliette said she should have great pleasure in viewing Mount Etna and the little island of Sicily, but she

thought the Duchess would be gone to Naples with Lady Carantani, as that lady had promised to spend the summer months with her friends in that city.

The Baroness then thought it would be better to embark for Naples, and that day month was fixed for them to go on board.

Juliette had no time now to indulge the melancholy which might otherwise have obtruded itself upon her mind at times at the remembrance of her dear, lost parent. She was busily occupied in assisting the Baroness in making her preparations, and in taking leave of their friends in Italy. Gonsalvo also was continually by her side, and cheering her spirits with the pleasing prospect of once more visiting her native land.

“But,” said she, while a tear glistened in her eye, “how would the pleasing prospect be brightened if my dear father had been permitted to have returned also.”

Gonsalvo entreated she would not indulge in those painful recollections, or sadden the prospect with unavailing grief. She thanked him for the rebuke, as also for his kind solicitude, and wiped away the pearly drop; nor had they ever cause again to complain of her want of exertion to appear cheerful and resigned to the will of Heaven, and truly grateful for all their kind solicitude and attention to her comfort and happiness. If she ever indulged in shedding the mournful tear, or heaved the sigh of regret, it was when alone, where no eye could witness the sad tear but Him, who always enabled her to wipe it away, and appear cheerful and contented.

On the day appointed, the wind proving favourable, they went on board at an early hour in the morning, as

the Captain had expressed his wish of sailing by break of day. As Juliette leaned upon the side of the deck, and viewed the mighty ocean and the vast expanse of waters, she offered up a silent prayer to that Omnipotent Being who alone was able to guide them, and implored his mighty protection and guidance to steer their vessel in safety to its destined port.

One morning as she was walking upon deck with the Baroness, Juliette, for the first time, enquired of the Baroness in what part of the kingdom her friends resided.

"In Somersetshire," was the reply. "My maiden name was Clifford."

"Clifford?" interrupted Juliette, almost breathless with surprise and joy. "My dear madam, the dearest friend of my childhood was named Frances Clifford, from Somersetshire. Is it possible that you can be a relation of her's?"

"I have a niece of that name, my dear Juliette."

"Oh! what happiness is still in store for me!" cried Juliette. "I shall then see and clasp my dear Fanny to my bosom once more."

Gonsalvo at that moment joined them; and, observing the unusual glow on Juliette's cheek, and the sparkle of her beautiful eye, enquired if he might be permitted to participate in the general joy. On being informed that his cousin Fanny was so dear to Juliette, he congratulated her on the pleasure such a circumstance must give.

Juliette now informed the Baroness that Mrs. Clifford had ever been a second mother to her, from the time she lost her own; that Fanny and herself had been educated at the same school together, and that the most sincere and

lasting attachment had been cemented between them ;— that tears of the most heartfelt grief had been shed at their parting.

“ What then, my dear girl, will be the pleasurable sensations that will fill your youthful hearts at meeting !”

“ Ah ! my dear madam, I shall have to thank you for the happiness, as well as the joy, of the present moment !”

“ I much wonder,” said Gonsalvo, “ I never heard my cousin name you while I was there ; but it might be occasioned by our having so many other topics to converse on : besides, I was there but a short time ; for the vessel sailed much sooner than was expected in which my uncle had taken and paid my passage to Italy.”

“ I also shall have great pleasure in visiting my native country again, after so long an absence,” said the Baroness. “ It is now eighteen years since I viewed my native land—England.”

On the arrival of the vessel in the bay of Naples, many boats were rowed along side of her, containing different parties, who seemed anxious to learn the names of the different passengers on board. Among these were the Marquis di Dalnira and Lozaro di Gracio. They were walking upon the pier when the packet hove in sight, and as the Marquis was expecting to receive news from his uncle, they agreed to take a boat and learn if there were any letters or packages for Naples from him. On reading over the list of names which was to be posted up at the custom-house, Lozaro noticed that of the Baron di Ferata and family. He then informed the Marquis that name was familiar to his ear, and thought he had heard Lady



Carantani mention a family of that name. The Marquis proposed making some inquiries respecting them, and for this purpose ordered the men to row the boat alongside the ship. Lozaro now called to one of the sailors, and requested to speak to one of the Baron di Ferata's attendants.

Gonsalvo was leaning over the side of the vessel, and, hearing the request, begged to know their business.

The Marquis said they were expecting friends from Italy, and seeing their name upon the list of arrivals, it had struck them, (as the name was familiar,) that perhaps they might be some of the party, and should esteem it a favour to be informed to what part of the city they were proceeding.

He politely replied, "He did not exactly know; they had several friends to visit, but he believed the Count di Gracio was the friend whom his father intended to call upon first. But," said he, "here is my father."

The Baron now listened to the request himself; and, on Lozaro informing him he was the son of that nobleman, the Baron invited them on deck immediately.

It will be almost needless to say that the Baroness and Juliette were delighted to hear that some of their friends were near at hand to receive them. The Baron now introduced Lozaro and the Marquis to the Baroness and Juliette. The latter instantly enquired if Lady Victoriana Carantani was at Naples, and was delighted to hear that both her and the Duchess of Castelmare were at the Marquis Durazzo's, where they should have the highest gratification in introducing these amiable friends to each other.

Soon after the custom-house officer and the physician had been on board, each party was allowed to go on shore. Some of the servants was sent forward to procure carriages, so that on their landing they instantly drove off by the direction of Lozaro to the palace of the Marquis Durazzo. Some of the attendants had rode forward to announce their arrival; and the Duchess flew to embrace the Baroness, as did also Juliette, to welcome her beloved Lady Carantani—who had only arrived at the Palace with her uncle and aunt, the Count and Countess di Camira, that morning. They now adjourned to the saloon, where they were joined by the Lady Janetta Durazzo and the rest of the party.

The Baron di Ferata named the few friends whom it was his wish to visit during his short stay at Naples. He had taken their passage for England by the next packet, which would sail in nine days. The Marquis Durazzo would not hear a word of their quitting the Palace during their short stay; therefore the Count di Gracio consented to remain at the Palace also. The mornings were passed in visiting their friends, and viewing the city of Naples and its environs: the evenings were spent in frequenting the different places of entertainment, or in splendid gaiety at the Palace.

On the fifth morning after the arrival of the Baron di Ferata at the palace of the Marquis Durazzo, the party were amusing themselves in the beautiful garden and plantations that surrounded the Palace, when, as Gonzalvo was viewing the shipping that lay at anchor from a lofty terrace which overlooked the bay, he discovered a strange vessel just entering the harbour. He called to the

rest of the party to enquire what ship it was. Lozaro ran into the pavilion for the spying-glass, when, having taken a view of the vessel, he exclaimed, "It is the packet!" All now was eagerness to know if there were any dispatches from the Marquis Carantani. The Marquis di Dalmira and Lozaro di Gracio now sallied forth to ascertain what news she had brought, while the rest of the party continued their ramble, and anxiously awaited their return.



## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Love is the briar-rose, wild and sweet,  
That in youth's gay and vivid morn  
Is gathered, thoughtless of the cheat—  
For know, the flower conceals a thorn.

As the Marquis Carantani led the way through the garden to visit Villa Nuovo, followed by Mr. Montfort and the Lady Emelinetta, they were met at the entrance-gate by his nephew, the Count Loretto, who consented to join

them in their walk. Mr. Montfort offered his arm to the Lady Emelinetta, and they proceeded through the beautiful plantations together, admiring the grandeur of the surrounding scenery, reflected upon the clear surface of the waters of the Lake of Averno.

“Are these scenes anything like what they are in England?” enquired her Ladyship.

“Oh, no !” replied he ; “we have no orange groves or vineyards there, nor do some of our fruits grow to that perfection which they do in these warmer countries. Here, too, you enjoy a more temperate climate. The weather in England is in general very changeable, and at certain seasons very foggy and damp, which causes a variety of complaints in the human frame, especially that of consumption. Hence it is that so many of our countrymen try the benefit of these warmer climates, as being the only and last resource they have to cling to, to lengthen out existence.”

“Still,” observed her Ladyship, “I should much like to visit England ; I have heard that it excels every other country in the world for real comforts.”

“I sincerely hope the Lady Emelinetta will have an opportunity of judging of its beauties, and of proving its hospitality. I will not attempt to describe the pleasure it would give me to conduct you to view my native land.”

“The great world,” replied Emelinetta, “I never knew but from report ; and, believe me, I should feel both timid and reluctant, I fear, to quit these sweet haunts of my childhood.”

“Are you sincere, lovely lady,” returned Montfort ; “I hope, for my sake, you are not.”

Emelinetta did not reply.

They had now arrived at the entrance-gate which led to the Villa, and were joined by the Marquis and her brother. On entering the house, Mr. Montfort expressed his satisfaction at the progress the workmen had made ; “ but,” said he, “ it will be some time before it is finished now.”

“ It will be finished soon enough, or, at least, by the time you will want it,” returned the Marquis.

“ What means your lordship ?” enquired Mr. Montfort.

“ Why,” said the Count Loretto, “ my uncle has been informing me that he intends to accompany you to England for a few months, and I suppose he concludes it will be ready for you by the time you return.”

“ You will want some few necessary articles to furnish it, and I think you will purchase them to much better advantage there than you can possibly do here. Besides,” observed the Marquis, “ I tell him he will want a companion in this great house—he will be dull by himself: what say you, Emelinetta ?”

“ Indeed, my dear sir, I hope you will not appeal to me: my judgment—” As she spoke she raised her eyes, and beheld Mr. Montfort earnestly regarding her: a smile of pleasure beamed on his countenance and sparkled in his eyes: the last sentence died upon her lips, her eyes again rested on the ground, and she felt exceedingly confused.

“ Will you not deign to give your opinion ?” asked Mr. Montfort: “ or does the subject displease the Lady Emelinetta ?”

“You misinterpret my silence,” said she, in a faltering voice; “I cannot form an opinion on the subject.”

“My dearest sister,” said the Count, taking the hand of Lady Emelinetta, “Mr. Montfort has honourably solicited your hand, and will lay his heart and fortune at your feet. Will you not then deign to accept him as your future lord, and be the companion he so much wishes, and stands in need of, to grace this charming abode?”

“My dear lord!”—said she, taking the hand of her uncle.

“You have both mine and your brother’s entire approbation on this subject,” said the Marquis Carantani. “We will leave you and Mr. Montfort to settle the business.” So saying, they left them, and went to look after some of the workmen.

Love is the purest sentiment which can animate the human heart: it only takes root in a genial soil, where it is nurtured by the sterling principles of truth and sincerity. It spurns at every selfish motive, and consults the real welfare of its object beyond every earthly consideration. Even that hand, whose all-powerful touch severs the ties of nature and holds mankind in subjection, cannot conquer love: it is the offspring of heaven, and inherits immortality. Love will exist after the silent tomb has covered its object; and though the subduing hand of Time may mellow the grief we feel at losing the idol of our affections, yet the heart which has once felt the influence of this resistless passion can never forget the sentiments which once engrossed every thought. There are but few, indeed, who can feel love in its native purity—vicious principles usurp the place of innocence and simplicity,

rendering the heart inaccessible to its power.—The attachment formed between Mr. Montfort and Lady Emelinetta was of the most exalted kind. Gratitude had first rooted it deeply in the heart of Emelinetta; he had saved her life at the hazard of his own, and the strong resemblance she bore to his lost Ellen, the object of his first and purest love, bound her to the heart of Edgar Montfort for ever.

When the Marquis and her brother were gone, Montfort took her trembling hand, and led her to a seat. He told his tale of love, and was accepted.

On their being again joined by the Marquis and the Count Loretto, the former took a hand of each, and joining them together, he said, “Take her, my friend, and may you be happy!”

As they walked back again through the gardens, the Marquis said he thought the workmen made great progress, and would complete their undertaking by the autumn. “Winter has now given place to the enchanting season of spring,” continued he, “which is not only the most delightful, but the safest period to undertake a voyage, especially to England. Then the trees are just opened into leaf; the banks of the rivers are embellished with meadows of diversified shades; the sweet-scented blossoms and the hedge-rows—all are so delightful to the eye of a foreigner. We must immediately commence preparations for this intended excursion.”

“Your Lordship has only to name the day,” said Mr. Montfort, “and I shall now feel most happy in accompanying you to my native land.”



One day, as the Lady Emelinetta and her brother were at their uncle's, she had retired from the dining apartment, and had taken refuge in a small room adjoining the greenhouse, and which also led into the aviary. She had seated herself on the recess of the window, which commanded one of the loveliest prospects in nature. A small manuscript of poetry lay near her, which seemed as if it had dropt from her hand, and she appeared lost in a reverie, and heard not footsteps in the apartment, nor heeded that Mr. Montfort for some time had stood near her. The paper lay open, and he could distinctly see, as it lay, to read the following lines :—

, SPRING.

Nature revives, and o'er the varied scene  
Spreads all her treasures to the raptured eye ;  
Fair Spring returns with pleasure-beaming mien,  
Flora and Zephyrus their aid supply.

And with them joy is not to be my guest,  
Nor with serenity their presence hail ;  
(Ah ! now what means the sigh that rends my breast !)  
Nor finds repose in this Elysian vale.

'Tis not the place—'tis not the scene,  
Which gives contentment to the soul :  
In vain is Nature smiling seen,  
She cannot sorrow's power controul.

At length, thinking the present moment a favourable one for pressing the subject nearest his heart, he advanced. Emelinetta, thinking it was Nanina going to

feed the birds, turned towards him. A blush instantly tinged the cheek of Emelinetta; but quickly recovering the natural ease of her manners, she answered his enquiries with her accustomed frankness. But soon did the returning crimson again flush in her countenance, as Montfort proceeded to express the hope that she would name the day that should make her his, and declared his happiness depended on her consenting to accompany him to his native land. Emelinetta was almost rivetted to the spot with surprise at this unexpected declaration; her lovely countenance alternately expressed astonishment and pleasure, or rather a mixture of both. She suffered him to proceed uninterrupted, it being out of her power to reply. He once more besought her to speak—at least, to relieve his mind from the torture of suspense. “If you do not wish my absence,” said he— These few words restored Emelinetta to her senses.

“Wish your absence!” repeated she. “Good heavens! no.” Then, as if she had said too much, she turned to conceal the confusion which overwhelmed her.

Mr. Montfort had picked up the scrap of paper, and on returning it to her, he said, “These few lines, dear lady, have exalted my heart from despair to the opposite extreme.” In short, he made use of arguments so unanswerable, that in the space of an hour she had yielded to his wishes, and named the happy day.

On his leaving her to join the Marquis and her brother, she hastened into the garden to compose her fluttered spirits. But this for some time was impossible; her senses were in a continual whirl of pleasure. The thoughts of his going to England had almost distracted.

her ; and just as she was in despair at losing him, perhaps for ever, he had declared that he could not endure the thought of quitting Italy, unless she would consent to accompany him. She paced to and fro in the pavilion, seated herself, then arose again ; in short, could scarcely credit her happiness. Approaching footsteps at length aroused her ; and perceiving it was the gentlemen taking a turn or two in the garden, she instantly escaped from the pavilion by a side path, not wishing they should observe her agitation. When they met at the tea table, she had recovered sufficient command of her feelings to meet them with ease and composure. Mr. Montfort, remarking the countenance of Emelinetta still wore an air of timidity, endeavoured to banish it, and at length succeeded in drawing the smile of confidence and cheerfulness to her features. That day month was fixed upon for making her the happy bride of Edgar Montfort. The Count Loretto had undertaken to conduct and manage both the Marquis and Mr. Montfort's affairs during their absence ; therefore the little party were now busily occupied in making the necessary preparations for their departure for England on the day after the one appointed for celebrating the nuptials of Mr. Montfort and the Lady Emelinetta. The ceremony was to take place in the chapel of the Benedictine Convent of San Paulo, adjoining the domains of the Marquis on the Lake of Averno ; and Father San Antonio was engaged to perform the marriage ceremony. Lady Madelina Stainhault, the earliest friend and companion of Lady Emelinetta, was to be bridesmaid on the occasion. The days now glided on serenely ; Emelinetta viewed each scene with delight ; every object took its colour from the

mind ; she also endeavoured to dispel apprehension for the future, though this at times was impossible, as she most fearfully dreaded encountering the voyage to England. She had not as yet forgotten the accident which had nearly proved fatal to her life, and she dreaded again tempting the water. At length the happy morning arrived which was to make her the blissful bride of Edgar Montfort. The Coant Loretto conducted his sister and the Lady Madelina to the Chapel. They had now arrived at the door, when they were met at the entrance by one of the lay-brothers, who conducted them into the Chapel. They advanced up the aisle, and were met by the Marquis Carantani and Mr. Montfort, who led Emelinetta to the altar. Montfort resigned her hand to the Marquis. They now ascended the steps of the altar ; the priest was ready to give the nuptial benediction ; and in a few minutes Emelinetta was saluted as the bride of Edgar Montfort. On leaving the Chapel they immediately drove off, and the remainder of the day was spent in the happiest manner at the enchanting Villa Averno.

On the following morning at daybreak, the Marquis Carantani, Mr. Montfort, and his lovely bride, left the Villa Averno, and, taking leave of their friends, set sail for England, by way of Naples ; and a fair wind soon waited them in sight of the bay. Happily for them the wind proved favourable, and they entered the harbour in safety. This was the vessel seen by Gonsalvo di Ferata. She had no sooner cast anchor than the Marquis di Dalmira and Lozaro di Gracio were on board of her as speedily as possible.

On their leaving their friends in the garden at the Palace Durazzo, they immediately sallied forth to the Custom-house, and, looking over the list of arrivals, read the names of the Marquis Carantani and Mr. Montfort. It is almost needless to say that the Marquis di Dalmira was overjoyed to see his uncle, especially so altered for the better, and most heartily congratulated him on his good health and spirits.

On being informed that his sister was below in the cabin, and that she was become the happy bride of Mr. Montfort, on her making her appearance he tenderly embraced her, and shaking Montfort heartily by the hand, hailed him as his brother with every mark of approbation, and wished them all the happiness they were capable of enjoying in this life.

The officers then coming on board, they were soon permitted to leave the ship. On landing, Mr. Montfort took especial care that his lovely bride did not again meet with any accident. They instantly entered the carriage, which was in readiness to receive them, and drove off to the Villa Pietro.

The Marquis Durazzo was highly delighted to meet his old friend and acquaintance of his younger days, the Marquis Carantani, and welcomed the happy new-married couple with every mark of hospitality; indeed, his friendly character never shone forth more conspicuously than at the present time. The most splendid entertainments were given every evening, and the principal nobility and gentry around were invited to join in the festivities. The Marquis Durazzo would have no nay, but the Count di

Camira and the Count di Gracio must take up their abode at his Palace during the stay of the Marquis Carantani and the Baron di Ferata.

We have already stated that the young Count Lozaro di Gracio was the accepted and approved admirer of the Lady Janetta Durazzo, and their marriage had of necessity been postponed on account of the fatal and unhappy death of her beloved brother, Lorio Durazzo. It was now proposed by the Marquis that it should take place while their friends were all assembled at the Villa Pietro. The most splendid preparations were now making for a grand fete on the occasion, which was to last three days; and on the last evening there was to be a masked ball, and the vineyards and orange-groves were to be most brilliantly illuminated with variegated lamps. The Duchess of Castellamore, Lady Carantani, and Miss Evelin, were to be the bridesmaids.

At length the happy morn arrived which was to make the Lady Janetta Durazzo the lovely bride of the enraptured Lozaro di Gracio. The party all assembled in the chapel of the Palace, and the Marquis's confessor attended to perform the marriage ceremony. After the nuptials were solemnised, they all adjourned to the Palace; the Marquis leading the way. Every room was thrown open, and about five hundred persons of distinction met to celebrate the happy event. The Duchess, who really loved her friend, felt supremely happy in seeing her thus worthily united to the object of her affections; and, in the anticipated happiness of her friend, forgot for awhile the dreariness of her own prospects. All unpleasant remembrances were for a time discarded, and their lovely coun-

tenances once more shone with the smile of unaffected joy. Many were the amusements invented to celebrate the nuptials of the worthy Lozaro di Gracio and the amiable Lady Janetta Durazzo ; and after the entertainments were over, they retired to the elegant villa which the Marquis had purchased and prepared for their reception. It was most delightfully situated on the banks of the Bay of Naples. The Duchess of Castelamore accompanied her friend Lady Janetta to the Villa Ariano for a few months.

The friendship already formed between Lady Carantani and Miss Evelin was, during the few days they had now passed together, much more strongly cemented, and they both felt the most sincere regret at the idea of parting—perhaps, for ever. Lady Carantani was also become most sincerely attached to the Lady Emelinetta, and consented to remain at Naples until the return of the Marquis Carantani from England, when she promised to give her hand to the Marquis di Dalmira.

The vessel in which the Marquis Carantani and Mr. Montfort had engaged their passage all the way to England could not remain in the Bay but four days ; therefore, they were compelled either to sail by her or take a fresh passage in another ship. They adopted the latter, and consented to sail in the same vessel with the Baron di Ferata and his family.

On their landing at Naples the Baroness wrote letters to her friends in England, to apprise them of her having sailed so far ; as did also Miss Evelin. Juliette had written to inform her friend Fanny of every particular that was necessary until she had the happiness of seeing her.



The voyage proved most favourable; and with feelings undescrivable to the whole party did they view the shores of Great Britain. The Baroness Ferata, after eighteen years' absence from her native land, would, doubtless, feel joy in the extreme at the pleasing idea of embracing those beloved friends from whom she had so long been separated. We cannot describe Mr. Montfort's feelings; they were known only to himself: and with regard to Miss Evelin, they were too painful. When she left those shores her beloved father was her companion; and now he was in the silent tomb—he was buried in a foreign land. The Baroness observed her emotions, and the struggles of her throbbing heart. She suffered her to indulge her feelings of filial grief for a time, as considering it would be highly wrong to interrupt her sorrow. At length she approached her, and, taking her trembling hand, she said, “Come, my dearest Juliette, I have suffered you to pay the tribute due to the memory of your beloved departed parent: but now you must dry these unavailing tears, and with me offer up the prayer of thanksgiving and praise to Him who has in mercy spared us to return in health and safety to our native land.” Juliette returned the embrace of her kind benefactress, and with her acknowledged the goodness of that Omnipotent Being who had guided the vessel through the trackless sea, and had brought them once more in sight of those peaceful shores.

They now went on deck to enjoy and partake of the pleasure and happiness which seemed to pervade the mind of every one there. Gonsalvo and the Lady Enclmetta soon joined them, and the latter expressed the happiness

she felt. They then joined the Marquis and Mr. Montfort, who, with the Baron di Ferata, were admiring the grandeur of the surrounding scene.

They were now coming in sight of the port of Dover; and certainly there could not be a more sublime scene than the one which presented itself to their admiring view.

Edgar, on his approach to the land which gave him birth, may be supposed to have those emotions of anxiety which ever animate a feeling heart. The feelings of Lady Emelinetta Montfort were various; hope and fear alternately filled her bosom, and the idea—should she be permitted to land in safety? Still the consciousness of present happiness, that received no other alloy, played round her heart, quickly chasing from it every fear. Montfort sat by her side, pointing out the different objects as the vessel made her way through the parting element. He observed in her countenance various changes, and scarcely knew how to attribute them to the right cause. He perceived a tear steal down her lovely face; when, taking her hand, he said, “My Emelinetta shall never shed a tear, if it depends on me, but that of joy. Those afflictions which affection can avert shall never touch her heart; and every happiness that love can furnish shall surely be her’s.”

“Ah!” returned she, a drop of sensibility again trembling in her eye, “believe me truly sensible of your regard: without it I feel the world would be a dreary blank indeed.”

An outcry from the sailors at this moment interrupted the reply of Montfort. On enquiring the cause—“You-

der," said one of the men, "is land; we shall get into port now before evening."

On their nearer approach to land, Lady Emelinetta was much amused with viewing the gay scene around. The number of the shipping in the harbour, the variety of boats, and different parties sailing for pleasure; the shouting of the sailors, and the joy expressed on so near an approach to their native land; the signals hoisted to their friends, and the tokens from the shore of recognition;—all was quite new to her, and she felt greatly amused.

On their landing the Marquis Carantani, with Mr. Montfort and his lovely bride, took their leave of the Baron and his family, and proceeded to London; while the Baron immediately set forward for Somersetshire, where they were received with the greatest joy by their expectant friends. But no rapture could equal that of the young friends, as they flew into each other's arms and shed delicious tears: they were tears of unalloyed joy on the part of Fanny; but Juliette could not forget that when last she beheld her friend she not only possessed a tender mother, but also a beloved father.

The Baron di Ferata purchased a house, pleasantly situated very near to his brother-in-law's, so that Juliette and Fanny were constantly together. The Baron had, unasked, arranged the pecuniary affairs of his ward. Mr. Evelyn had made his will, &c. previous to his leaving England; therefore, very little trouble was required. He found that Mr. Evelyn had property, properly vested in the Bank of England, to the amount of twenty thousand pounds, besides other landed estates worth thirty more, all

of which he had placed in the hands of trustees for the sole benefit of his only child, Juliette Evelin.

The days of Juliette now passed in tranquillity and peace. She had her own little apartments fitted up at the Baron di Ferata's, for she declared she could never leave them. Time passed on almost unperceived, and Juliette attained the age of twenty-one, and was accordingly declared to be at her own disposal, and sole mistress of the ample property her beloved parent had bequeathed her.

"Now, my dear," said her second mother, as she frequently called the Baroness, "you are at liberty to leave us and enter into housekeeping yourself."

Juliette coloured, and most affectionately assured her benevolent friend that she had been so happy under her roof that it would be with the utmost reluctance she should ever quit it:

"Some little circumstance or other *may* occur which may, however, remove your reluctance," archly exclaimed Fanny, who was present.

"True, my dear," answered the good Baroness; "and though I should be sorry to part with Juliette, whom I have loved and considered as my daughter from the moment that she came under my care, yet I own I shall be most happy to see her at the head of a family, the happy wife of some worthy man."

"And pray, my dear aunt," said Fanny, "would it not also give you great pleasure to see my cousin the husband of some woman who was worthy of such a one as Gonzalvo will, I am sure, make?"

The arch expression of her niece's countenance excited the curiosity of the Baroness; and she now learnt that on the preceding day Gonsalvo had openly declared his attachment to the orphan whom he had at first only considered as his sister, but who refused to listen to his professions until he had obtained the consent of his parents.

"And how could you, for a moment, imagine that it would be withheld?" said the Baroness, affectionately kissing Juliette's glowing cheek. "Believe me, my dear girl, it has long been the united wish of his father and myself that Gonsalvo might make choice either of Fanny or yourself for his future partner in life; and it will be with the most unfeigned and sincere pleasure that I shall see you become indeed my daughter."

Juliette threw her arms round the neck of the Baroness, and returned her maternal embrace with tears of the most filial affection. When she had a little recovered herself, she said, "My dear madam, you must know that my beloved friend, Fanny, has not escaped the snares of love: the sly god has caught her,—has found a crevice in her susceptible heart; and I hope you will see her ere long the happy wife of the amiable Charles Sydney, our worthy rector's son."

"Indeed?" said the Baroness, looking tenderly at her niece, who had retired to the window, covered with blushes. "Nothing, I do assure you, will give me more heartfelt pleasure and satisfaction than to see you, my dear children, tenderly united and happily settled in this life."

In the course of six months Juliette Evelyn became the happy bride of Gonsalvo di Ferata: and in three months

after her friend, Fanny Clifford, was united to the worthy Charles Sydney. The friends now resided near each other; for as Mr. Sydney was a surgeon, he most willingly acceded to the wishes of his amiable bride and her friends, by commencing practice in the town near which they resided. Thus Juliette and Fanny were frequently together; and the friendship formed in youth was matured and cherished in riper years, and which nothing but the all-conquering hand of death ever had power to separate.



## CHAPTER XXIX.

Life's chequered scenes, 'tis true, display  
The changes of an April day;  
Yet every feeling heart must know,  
'Tis from the mind our joys must flow.

After the vessel got out of sight of the port of Almeria she met with many strong and heavy gales of contrary wind, which drove her about for several days. At length with much difficulty she got into port, and they were able to cast anchor. The pratique officer permitted them to

land without performing quarantine, which was a source of great pleasure to Maria and Clari, as they felt quite unwell after being tossed for so many days upon the stormy sea. They landed on a fine quay, which presented a very busy scene, being crowded with horses and mules, carrying skins of wine, packages of fruit, and other articles of commerce. The porters passing to and from the vessel in the port were numerous, and the labourers five times as many as there was any occasion for.

The Count thought it would be advisable to leave Maria and Clari at the inn, and proceed to Dr. Belcour's, which they accordingly did. They found him at home, and he welcomed their return with expressions of unfeigned joy. Di Salvo now informed the Doctor that Maria was at the inn where they landed, and also that Clari, the female servant who lived with the Countess as nurse-maid, was with her; and, on the Doctor enquiring where they had met with her, Di Salvo related to him all the particulars.

The Doctor now expressed a wish to accompany them to the inn, to see if Maria would recollect him. On their passing near the window of the hotel, Clari caught sight of them, and immediately exclaimed, "Santa Maria! there is the Doctor; look, Maria, there is Dr. Belcour—my mistress the Countess's own doctor!"

Maria now arose to hobble to the window; but they had disappeared, and in a few moments Di Salvo entered, followed by the Count and the Doctor. Clari instantly ran towards him, and the Doctor immediately recollected her. But neither Maria nor the Doctor recollected each



other until they spoke, so much was Maria altered, and her eyesight was indifferent also. However, on Maria speaking, Dr. Belcour soon recollected her; and a most interesting scene took place on their recognising each other. The Doctor then proposed their resting for the night, and said on the morrow he would accompany them to Naples.

They all now adjourned to the Doctor's house, and during the evening recounted all the particulars they knew, and their statement fully corroborated the facts already related. Feeling much fatigued after the voyage, they retired to rest at an early hour.

On the following morning after they had taken breakfast, they all set off for the city of Naples. On the party coming near to Altiere, Di Salvo thought it would be the best plan to leave Maria and Clari along with old Annetta at the Villa. For this purpose the chaise-boy was ordered to drive that way. On their approach to the Villa Di Salvo alighted, and walked forward to apprise Annetta of their coming. He rang at the portal, and on the door being opened by a young person whom he did not know, he enquired for Annetta. Beatrice (for that was the name of the Countess's maid who now opened the door) asked him to walk in, and ran to call Annetta. The old woman now came hobbling into the room, and on recognising Di Salvo, gave an exclamation of unfeigned joy. She then informed him that the Countess and the Lady Amanda were in the saloon, and had been at the Villa near a fortnight. The old woman soon left him to go and inform them of his arrival. We will not attempt to describe their pleasure, and the joy evinced at his return. Di

Salvo expressed the gratification he felt at seeing them at the Villa. The Countess informed him that the third day after he left them she received the Pope's permission to leave the Convent, and they had been at the Villa ever since.

Di Salvo now gave the Countess a brief relation of the events that had taken place. He told them he had brought Maria with him, and that she would be at the Villa immediately; but he said nothing either of the Doctor or Clari. While he was speaking the carriage drove up to the door. The Count alighted from the carriage first, and then the Doctor; the Countess instantly recognised him. While she was yet welcoming him to Alticre, Clari and Maria entered the room, followed by Annetta. Words are inadequate to give an idea or description of the scene that followed. It was most affecting on both sides. Poor Maria exclaimed, she should now die in peace. "Ah, Santa Maria!" continued the old lady, "now that my eyes have seen that angel face once more, you may lay my poor bones in the silent grave."

"No, my good Maria," said the Countess, "I hope we shall all live to see many a happy day yet."

The old lady sobbed, and laughed, and cried in a breath; and it was some time before she could really be persuaded that she was in her right senses.

Clari, immediately on entering the room, recollected her beloved mistress, and falling on her knees before her, she clasped her dress, and, kissing it, thanked Heaven she was permitted to see her again. Then turning to the Lady Amanda, she exclaimed, "Surely I must know that face!" then running up to her, she moved the beautiful

tresses from her forehead, and screamed out, "It is, it is my dear young lady!" and clasped her in a fond and rapturous embrace.

As soon as the agitation of feeling which had been occasioned by the unlooked-for meeting had in some degree subsided, each took a seat, and listened calmly to the many questions and enquiries each had to make; and it was a late hour when Di Salvo, accompanied by the Count di Romano and the Doctor, took their leave, and hastened to the Palace di Salvo. The Marquis was not yet returned home from the Villa Pietro, where he had been visiting for a week; therefore Di Salvo and the Count soon retired to rest.

On the following morning, after having taken breakfast, horses were ordered to be got ready, and Di Salvo and the Count set off for the Villa Pietro. It was the day after the marriage of Lozaro di Gracio and the Lady Janetta Durazzo; therefore they were just in time to partake of the brilliant entertainments which had been prepared to celebrate the happy event. Di Salvo congratulated his friend Lozaro on his happy union with the Lady Janetta, and most cordially wished him every happiness with his lovely bride. Lozaro embraced his friend, and expressed the pleasure he felt at his near approach to the same felicity. On parting, these sincere friends promised to visit each other as often as possible; and Di Salvo hoped, when next they met, he should have the supreme happiness of presenting to him the Lady Amanda as Lady Di Salvo.

When the gay scenes and entertainments were over, and the happy pair had left the Villa Pietro, each party began

to think of returning home; and, among the rest, the Marquis di Salvo named an early day for taking his departure. He had felt his mind so much relieved and cheered by the society of his friend, the Marquis Durazzo, and his thoughts so engrossed by the hilarity and happiness that everywhere surrounded him, that he felt reluctant to take his leave until the rest of the party had taken their departure each to their respective homes. The Marquis Durazzo and the Count di Gracio were prevailed upon to accompany the Marquis di Salvo to his Palace, to partake of the general joy that reigned there.

On the morning following that on which the Marquis di Salvo returned home, he sent for Dr. Belcour to attend him in his study: the Marquis Durazzo, the Counts di Gracio and Romano, with Rosano di Salvo, were there ready to meet him. On the Doctor entering the apartment the Marquis di Salvo arose from his seat, and, extending his hand, politely invited him to take a seat. After a few preliminary observations, he was requested by Di Salvo to give his father a full and circumstantial relation of every circumstance connected with the unfortunate Count di Baretto and his Countess.

The Doctor then fully substantiated every fact, as already stated, by informing the Marquis that he was physician to the Count Ferando di Baretto, the first husband of the Countess, now residing at the Villa Altieri, and that the Lady Amanda was his child: he would solemnly prove her identity by the scar on her forehead, which occurred through the carelessness of her nurse, whom they had met with, and brought with them to the Villa for the purpose of substantiating the truth of her relationship.

He also solemnly protested that himself, Maria, and the Lady Marietta, her sister, were the only persons who were concerned in her escape to the convent of Santa Floriano, after her recovery from the wound inflicted by her second husband, the Count Geraldio di Baretto. He also confessed that he had attended the mock funeral of the Countess, the Count having absconded: he had taken upon himself to order the funeral at the Countess's request, and had himself, assisted by Maria, seen that the coffin was fastened up, and no one was permitted to enter the room until the evening of the funeral. All went off so well, that if the Count had ever returned to his Villa again, he would have been convinced that she was dead. But he never did return, and his creditors seized upon the property. The two children were removed to the house of their maternal aunt, the Lady Marietta di Blanch: the youngest child died, and Clari would prove when and where the child died and was buried. The Countess had lived secluded at her own villa until she recovered of her wound; when, by the kind assistance of her sister, the Lady Marietta di Blanch, himself and Maria saw her safely conducted to the Convent della Floriano, and lodged within its peaceful walls. From the time the Lady di Blanch had taken up her residence at the Villa Altiere she had never had an opportunity of hearing the least tidings either of the Countess or her daughter, until Di Salvo and the Count di Romano had waited upon him for the purpose of making the necessary enquiries concerning her.

The Marquis had listened very attentively during the whole of the Doctor's relation, and at the conclusion ex-

pressed his entire satisfaction and conviction that the Father Raldino, or otherwise the Count Geraldio di Baretto, was in reality the second husband, and only uncle to the Lady Amanda. The Marquis then related to the Doctor the wretched end he had met with, and his awful death. Di Salvo expressed the pleasure he felt that he had not been brought to a public ignominious death on the scaffold.

The Count di Romano here observed, that as the Doctor had come to Naples for the express purpose of proving the Lady Heloisa to be the Countess di Baretto, and parent of the Lady Amanda, it would be necessary to have it publicly testified, and the hereditary property of her father, which the creditors of Geraldio di Baretto had no right to seize, restored to his child. The rest of the party coinciding in the same opinion, the Count di Romano accompanied the Doctor and Rosano di Salvo to the Villa Altiere, to obtain the consent of the Countess to their plan being immediately put into force.

We have already stated, that during these enquiries the Countess di Baretto (as we must in future call the Lady Heloisa) had removed with her daughter, the Lady Amanda, to the Villa Altiere; and it was there that the Marquis di Salvo (his every doubt having been removed) paid her a visit, and solicited in due form the consent of the Countess to the nuptials of Rosano di Salvo with the Lady Amanda di Baretto, and which she granted him with an entire satisfaction.

In this interview the Marquis was so highly fascinated with the elegant manners of the accomplished Countess di Baretto, and pleased with the delicacy and sweetness

which appeared in the deportment of the Lady Amanda, that his consent was now no longer a constrained one; and he most willingly acquiesced in the wishes of his son, and relinquished the views of splendid rank and princely fortune for those of virtue and permanent happiness. After having paid this visit, he returned home in the evening with more pleasure, more cheerful and happy, and with that peace of mind he had never dared hope to have ever enjoyed again.

The thirtieth day from that on which the Marquis di Salvo paid a visit to the Countess di Baretto at the Villa Altiere was fixed upon for the nuptial day. Doctor Belcour and Clari consented to remain at Naples till after the happy day, and to witness the splendid fete which was to commemorate it.

As the good old Annetta was to accompany the Lady Amanda to reside under her roof until death should call her away from this world, so Maria was to take her place at the Villa Altiere, and to end her days in the service of her beloved mistress, the Countess di Baretto. They were neither of them ever to work again, but to pass their time in what way they liked best.

One evening, as Di Salvo returned home from the Villa Altiere, he found the Count di Ravenna and his family arrived at the Palace. The Lady Edwina was married to a wealthy Spaniard, Don Alphonso Valencia; and they were on their way to England to pass the summer.

As the Count was come to Naples to take up his residence there for a few years at least, it was absolutely necessary for him either to purchase a villa or rent one. The Villa Nuovo, the late favourite residence of the Mar-



chioness di Salvo, and which was so elegantly furnished, and so delightfully situated on the banks of the Bay of Naples, had only been inhabited by a few of the domestics ever since her death. It was, therefore, proposed by the Marquis di Salvo that they should take up their abode at this enchanting spot, to which the Count di Ravenna consented, on condition that he was allowed to pay a certain sum annually for the use of the furniture, and for rent, &c.

"This point you must settle with my son," said the Marquis: "it was bequeathed him by his mother."

Di Salvo at this moment entering the saloon, the Count named the subject, and agreed to rent the Villa Nuovo just as it was, ready furnished, at a certain sum, which terms being acceded to by Di Salvo, he was to take possession of it on the morrow.

On a day appointed, the Marquis di Salvo accompanied the Count di Ravenna, his Lady, and their daughter, the Lady Ceceliana, on a visit to the Villa Altieri. The Countess di Bartto and the Lady Amanda had been taught to love the Countess di Ravenna and her daughter, the Lady Ceceliana, before they had seen them. Maria had made known their many virtues and amiable qualifications with tears of gratitude streaming down her aged face; and she loudly testified the joy she felt, on seeing them at the Villa Altieri. The Lady Amanda was, indeed, highly fascinated with the lovely Ceceliana, and a strong attachment was quickly formed between them. They were now constantly together, either at the one house or the other, and their lively, amiable dispositions

soon so strongly endeared them to each other, that they were become quite inseparable.

The day was now fast approaching which was to make the Lady Amanda the lovely, happy bride of the enraptured Rosano di Salvo. The Lady Ceceliana was to be sole bridesmaid on the occasion. Every preparation was making to celebrate the happy event. The dresses were simply elegant, and of the purest colour and texture ; but they needed not ornament or dress to set off either their figure or person, for never had nature formed two more lovely females.

The twentieth of May, the day on which Amanda completed her eighteenth year, her nuptials with Rosano di Salvo were solemnised in the church of Santa della Martino in the presence of the Countess di Baretto, her mother, the Marquis di Salvo, and a few select friends.

As Amanda was now led through the aisles of the church, on looking round her she could not help recollecting when, on a former occasion, she had met Di Salvo at the sacred altar on the Lake of Celano ; and the scenes of that moment, as also those of Santa della Floriano now rose to her memory. The happy character and contrast of those which her present situation opposed to them drew tears of tender joy and gratitude to her lovely eyes ; and it was with difficulty she could quell the hysteric sensation that pervaded her heart. Then, irresolute, desolate, surrounded by entire strangers, and ensnared by the vilest enemies, she had believed, when dragged from the chapel and torn from his sight, that she had seen Di Salvo for the last time. Now, supported by the presence of a

beloved and tender parent, and by the willing approbation of the very person who had hitherto so strenuously and indignantly opposed her marriage, they were again met at the sacred altar, to ratify by the most solemn ceremony the vows which would unite their hearts in one, and which nothing but the hand of death would ever be able to separate. And as these ideas rushed across her mind, and the recollection of the moment when she had been carried from the altar glanced before her—that moment when she had called upon him for succour, supplicated even to hear his voice once more, to take one long, one last farewell; and when a blank silence, which, as she believed, was even that of death, had succeeded—as the anguish of that moment was now remembered, Amanda became more than ever sensible of the happiness of the present. As a testimony of singular esteem and particular regard, Bardo and Annetta were permitted to be present at the marriage ceremony. They were placed in one of the lofty galleries of the church; and, as they looked down upon the happy group assembled beneath, and witnessed the delight so joyfully depicted in the countenance of Di Salvo; the tender complacency portrayed in that of the Lady Amanda, which her veil, partly undrawn, allowed them to observe; the smile of approbation and satisfaction in the features of my Lord Marquis di Salvo; the pensive happiness in those of the Countess di Baretto; and, indeed, the pleasure-beaming look depicted in the countenance of each person assembled on this happy occasion, Annetta could scarcely refrain from expressing aloud the happiness she felt; but as for Bardo, his joy

knew no bounds, for, at the conclusion of the ceremony, when each friend was congratulating the happy pair, and wishing them every happiness this sublunary world could afford, his feelings rose to the highest pitch of ecstacy, and leaping from his seat, he entirely forgot the sacred place he was in. He danced and leaped about; he seized fast hold of poor Annetta, and clasping her in a firm embrace, he swung her round and round, exclaiming aloud, "O giorno felice! O giorno felice!"—thanks be to San Paulo, I have, indeed, lived to see this happy, happy day! Then recollecting himself, he begged the old lady's pardon, and bowing and scraping, he politely took her hand, and led her from the gallery.

On reaching the bottom of the stairs they were met by Di Salvo, who was leading his lovely, happy bride from the church. At sight of him Bardo let go the arm of poor Annetta, and leaping forward, he threw himself at the feet of his dear master with every expression of feelings of the most unspeakable transports of delight. In vain he attempted to speak; extreme joy completely choaked his utterance, and for some minutes he could not articulate a single sentence.

Di Salvo and his dear Amanda raised him from his humble posture with expressions of the greatest condescension and feeling of regard, and bid him be calm and moderate his feelings of overjoy; but in vain they attempted to appease or quell the transports of his mind: the more they strove to compose him, the more he gave vent to the joy that pervaded his heart. At length, recovering his speech, he talked, he sang, he danced, he

shouted, till even his master feared for his reason: he really thought his intellects were affected—that overjoy had, in reality, completely turned his brain.

Presently the party left the church, and entered their carriages; and on driving off, Bardo leaped behind that of his beloved master, shouting as loud as he was able, “O giorno felice! O giorno felice!”

“Life’s like a garden decked with flowers,  
With sweetest scents the air perfuming,  
In earliest summer’s loveliest hours,  
When all around is gay and blooming.

“In sandy deserts spots are found  
Which smiling vegetation covers;  
Where Nature’s gayest gifts abound—  
This, this is life to happy lovers.”

## CHAPTER XL.

“How often have I loitered o’er each charm.”

“Oh ! if there be on earth a joy,—  
A sympathetic, feeling one,—  
Which neither use nor time can cloy,  
Is it not what we think of Home ?”

On the Marquis Carantani, Mr. Montfort, and his lovely bride taking leave of the Baron di Ferata and his family, they proceeded without delay direct to London, as Mr. Montfort particularly wished to show his lady the great metropolis of England, of which she had both read and heard so much.

On reaching Highgate, they first caught a view of the capital of the British empire; and never could it have been seen to more advantage. The declining sun gilded its lofty spires; the atmosphere was uncommonly fine; and the volumes of smoke, which generally enveloped the proud city, were lifted to a sufficient height to allow a sight of one of the sublimest and richest landscapes that eyes ever beheld. They were almost rivetted to the spot; and Mr. Montfort here observed, that every one who wishes

to enjoy a *coup-d'œil* of London ought to repair to Highgate for the purpose.

In passing through the streets of London to the Adelphi, one of the most splendid hotels, where they took up their residence, it would be difficult to describe the sensations felt by the Marquis Carantani and his niece, on viewing the variety and grandeur of the objects that everywhere presented themselves to their astonished and enraptured view. It was so unlike anything they had ever witnessed, and so very different to what they had even read of;—and Mr. Montfort quite enjoyed the remarks, and astonishment, and surprise, expressed at almost every fresh object they came to.

Being exceedingly tired and fatigued with the day's journey, on arriving at the hotel they agreed to rest for the remainder of the day, and retired to rest at an early hour, proposing to take a glance at the metropolis on the morrow, and proceed to Cheltenham on the following day, to enjoy the delightful season and the beauties of the country while the weather was favourable. Besides, every one who had a residence in the country—and, indeed, some of those who had not—had left town to enjoy the beauties of the country and to partake of the benefit of the fresh air, after having been confined a long winter in the metropolis.

The little party arose at an early hour on the following morning; and after having partaken of an English breakfast, which they truly enjoyed, they set forward on their perambulations through the metropolis. To attempt a particular description of each place they visited in London would be utterly impossible: a brief account only



can be given. It was their intention to make a longer stay in town before they left England ; and on that account they now only visited some of the parts most worthy of their notice.

The united cities of London and Westminster stand on a gentle declivity on the northern bank of the Thames, the winding course of which they follow for several miles. On the south side of the river is Southwark : but though these are the principal component parts of what is denominated the metropolis, numerous villages extend from it in all directions to a considerable distance ; so that it is impossible for a stranger to determine where London begins or ends. As our travellers could not expect to visit in one day the numerous places worthy of observation in this large metropolis, they made the best use of their time and saw what they possibly could.

As soon as they had taken breakfast, they sallied forth in the carriage which their host had prepared, and which was waiting at the door ready to convey them to visit the west end of the town. They first saw St. James's Palace and the Park ; which can only derive their consequence from being at times the residence and property of royalty. Many subjects have much better-looking mansions than St. James's. His present Majesty now either resides at Windsor, or at the Pavilion at Brighton, and the old palace is only occasionally used for state purposes. Buckingham Palace is now nearly finished, and is a most magnificent building ; and they could have here staid much longer, had time permitted, in viewing its grandeur.

They next entered Westminster Abbey, the most magnificent Gothic pile in England, and the place where our

kings are crowned, and where many of their mouldering remains repose ; and every spot, where a monument can be erected, is filled with sculpture and inscriptions. They were gratified beyond all description in viewing this sacred place—where the learned, the great, the wise, and the brave, of all ages and all parties, sleep in social peace. The tongue, that was wont to rivet the attention of an audience, is mute ; the heart that dared, and the hand that executed, are now mouldering into dust ; and names that once filled the world are now confined to one narrow spot—the grave. Poet's Corner, as it is called, was more interesting to our travellers than any other part of the Abbey. “ I can survey the memorials of grandeur with indifference,” said the Marquis Carautani, “ but the busts of genius, or its recording epitaphs, excite emotions dear to my heart.” They greatly admired Henry the Seventh's Chapel, as indescribably rich and beautiful. The coronation chairs, and the celebrated stone of Scoon, in King Edward's Chapel, you may be assured, did not escape their notice ; but so many wonderful objects, the boast of art, are crowded into this Abbey, that they could scarcely stay to take a survey even of the principal. From this asylum of the illustrious dead they proceeded to both Houses of Parliament ; but they did not strike them as being particularly grand. The Marquis was most forcibly struck with the view of the venerable hall of Westminster. They next visited Whitehall, and from thence drove to Somerset House.

The day was now advancing ; but as their stay was to be so short, they were unwilling to lose an opportunity of inspecting what was really worth viewing ; they, there-

fore, proceeded from Somerset House to the British Museum, the great national depository of antiquities and curiosities. They expressed a hope of visiting this wonderful place again, and proceeded to visit St. Paul's Cathedral, the most magnificent Protestant church in the world, and only inferior to St. Peter's at Rome. As it was a clear, bright afternoon, they ascended to the dome, and had a bird's-eye view of London and Westminster. They next drove through crowded streets to the Bank and the Royal Exchange, both of which the Marquis thought extremely well adapted to their destination.

To visit London for the first time and not see the Lions would have savoured of particularity; they, therefore, paid a visit next to see their high mightinesses, the wild beasts, and were not a little pleased with some of them, although they showed them little civility. They then entered the Tower, and were shown the Horse Armoury and the Magazine of Arms, both of which filled them with admiration; and likewise the regalia of England, which were exhibited in a dark room, lighted by a candle through an iron-grated window. They were also shown other curiosities, too numerous to mention.

On returning to the hotel, they took a view of St. Stephen's, Walbrook, one of the finest architectural remains of Sir Christopher Wren, and the most elegant parish church in England. It stands behind the Mansion-house, which they also took a view of. It is a building neither Gothic nor Grecian, but not ill-adapted for the residence of the Lord Mayor for the time being. The Marquis and his niece were next amused with a sight of Guildhall, or the Town-house of London, and with the grotesque figures

of Gog and Magog, and made many enquiries as to the reason, and for what purpose two such out-of-the-way figures could have been placed there. But all their enquiries proved of no further information than that they had been placed there for people to laugh and stare at.

On passing through White Hart-court, Gracechurch-street, their attention was drawn towards a large meeting-house belonging to the Society of Friends, called in derision Quakers. Great numbers of them were then entering the meeting-house. The Marquis making some enquiries respecting these people, (as he was much taken with their plain, neat appearance,) Mr. Montfort said, "I will give you a short description and some account of these amiable, discreet people, who belong to that meeting-house. The interior of the building is conveniently arranged for the congregation; but it has neither pulpit, communion table, or font. There is a gallery for their preacher—for they have no appointed minister, but receive exhortations from those whose minds they believe are impressed by divine influence. Preaching is not confined to the male sex—females share the duties of the sacred office; and they frequently address large audiences with the most persuasive eloquence. This sect appeared in England about the year 1650. The morality and simplicity of their lives evince the purity of their religion; and the Society of Friends are respected and esteemed everywhere. They have another large meeting-house in the neighbourhood of Bishopsgate-street. They are now, no doubt, congregating to hear one of their favourite female preachers."

Having now seen and noticed some of the principal attractions of London, they returned to the hotel, highly gratified with the day's excursion ;—and what they had seen would serve to enliven the conversation of a dull winter evening.

In the evening they visited Drury-lane ; and the Lady Emelinetta Montfort was highly delighted with an English theatre.

Early on the following morning they left the hotel, and took their route along the road direct for Oxford. Though London presents so many attractions to a stranger, that weeks, and even months, might elapse before curiosity would be gratified, yet with all its novelties, its bustle, and its amusements, they were not sorry they had left it when, on travelling through the delightful country of England, they met with beauties and attractions far surpassing anything they had seen in the great city of London. They took the Uxbridge road, and travelled over a champaign, fertile, and interesting country, relieved by masses of building and villages, which successively line the road to the distance of some miles, and had a remote view of Harrow-on-the-Hill. The fresh air and green fields were quite refreshing and delightful to the travellers, who had never seen anything so lovely and enchanting until their arrival in England.

On arriving at Uxbridge they stayed to view the old house in which the Commissioners, on the part of Charles the First and the Parliament, met to discuss and settle differences ; but the conference broke up without coming to any agreement. After crossing the Caln and the Grand Junction Canal, they pursued the Oxford road for a few

miles, but soon took that which leads to Amersham. They passed on the left Bulstrode Park, the seat of the Duke of Portland, and in the same direction saw Beaconsfield, the residence of Waller, the poet, and, in latter times, of Edmund Burke. Leaving Cheneys on the right, the burial-place of the noble family of Russell, and their abode before they settled at Woburn, in a short time they reached Amersham, an ancient borough town, but remarkable only for Shardeloes, the seat of the Drakes, which is in its vicinity. The grounds are beautifully varied, and ornamented with plantations.

Passing Chesham Boys, and continuing their progress through a charming vale, whose bounding hills are richly feathered with beech, they reached Missenden, where stood a once-famous abbey, now converted into a farmhouse. Three miles beyond this they had a view of Great Hampden on the left, the seat of the Hampdens, an ancient and distinguished family, one of whom was the patriot who lost his life in the skirmish of Chalgrove-field, soon after the commencement of the civil wars. The male line has long been extinct. Both the son and grandson of John Hampden were singularly unfortunate.

Continuing without interruption, they reached Wendover, an ordinary town, but possessing the privilege of sending two members to Parliament. Here they were charmed with a delightful prospect: the hills assume a bold form, and the woods become extensive, which adds to the grandeur of the scene. In the vicinity stands Claydon Hall, the seat of Lady Ferringhly, built by her relation, the late Earl Verney.

They now descended into the rich vale of Aylebury,



and soon arrived at the town of that name, which is situated on an eminence, overlooking the surrounding campaign. It is an ancient and respectable town ; and, in the time of the Saxons, was a place of strength. Changing horses here, they drove through a continuation of the same rich vale, and passing through Winslow, a small place, arrived at Buckingham,<sup>5</sup> the county town, pleasantly situated on the river Ouse. They were amused with taking a short view of the lace manufactory.

After making a hasty dinner at the Cobham Arms, they set out to visit Stowe, the original creation of Lord Cobham, and which received many capital improvements from his nephew and successor, Earl Temple. The gardens consist of four hundred acres, and their whole extent is replete with groves, temples, and winding streams, which open successively on the eye like visionary enchantment. Having viewed the principal objects and the external attractions of this charming place, they proceeded to inspect the interior parts, which they found replete with the choicest works of art, of magnificence, and splendour.

Leaving Buckingham at an early hour the next morning, they drove through Middleton Stoney towards Woodstock. The country to Middleton is rather flat ; but they caught a view of Insmore, the seat of Mr. Fermor, which is most pleasantly embossed in trees ; and they also passed the mansion and park of Lord Jersey, but this possesses nothing remarkable.

On arriving at the Marlborough Arms, Woodstock, they immediately set out to visit Blenheim ; and though they had seen many places, yet they candidly owned that nothing they had seen could be put in competition with it.



They had admired Hyde Park, as furnishing a pleasant ride or drive to those who wish to take an airing ; but, were all the parks in the vicinity of London thrown into one, and all their beauties united, they would not equal in magnitude or natural charms Blenheim park singly. "In this," observed Mr. Montfort, "I only repeat the words of King George the Third, who, on entering the triumphal gate of Woodstock, and being struck with the noble view, exclaimed, 'We have nothing equal to this!'"

After going over the house and the gardens, and taking the ride of the park, they set forward without further delay for Cheltenham. On the near approach to that place the road is flat and uninteresting, and they almost entered that place of fashionable resort before they were aware that it was so near. The Marquis Carantani and Lady Emelinetta Montfort were quite captivated with Cheltenham.

From an elegant poem, ascribed to Dr. Mavor, the reputed author of the *Poetical Cheltenham Guide*, are taken the following few verses, descriptive of the scenery round the wells :—

Delightful site ! where Pleasure reigns,  
And Flora's gayest sweets,  
Not fairer shines far Tempe's plains,  
Where every beauty meets.

All hail ! I feel poetic fire,  
When Cheltenham is my theme ;  
And strike with deeper sounds the lyre,  
That pants for ardent fame.

Let Aganippé's sacred spring  
Inspire lymphatic bards ;  
While I the waters taste and sing,  
That blest Hygeia guards.

The joys of love, the social powers,  
Here spread their blooming train ;  
And every Muse must haunt the bowers,  
Where Health and Quiet reign.

Here walks, beset with branching trees,  
A grateful shade bestow,  
When summer's unrelenting breeze  
Enervates all below.

Here meads, by Flora's bounty blessed,  
Arrayed in lively green ;  
And villas, deep in woods embraced,  
That cheer the varied scene.

Elysian vale ! thy bounds I'll trace  
When Sol first paints the sky ;  
And when he sinks with broadened face,  
In haste to close his eye.

And oft, as morn shall shed her dews,  
Fair Cheltenham, let thy spring  
With copious draughts refresh the Muse,  
Thy matchless joys to sing.

The feelings of Edgar Montfort, on once more viewing and visiting that home, once so endeared and beloved, are indescribable. However, after having retired to his own apartment, and spent a short time alone, he was enabled to meet the Marquis and his amiable bride in the drawing-room with feelings of tranquillity and manner composed. There needed no apology for his absence : the Marquis guessed the cause, and had made every necessary excuse.

This little party spent two months in enjoying the country, in visiting the environs of Cheltenham for some miles round, and in viewing everything worthy of their notice. They then returned to London for a week, prior to their leaving England for Naples. Again they partook of the pleasure of visiting every place of amusement, and in viewing what was thought worthy of notice. They then travelled through the country to Falmouth, where they embarked in the first vessel bound for Naples.

Their return to that city was hailed by their friends with every demonstration of joy. The Marquis di Dalmina had never left, except to accompany Lady Carantani and Lady Janetta di Gracio on a visit to the Duchess of Castelamere, at Sicily. That lady accompanied them on their return, for the pleasure of spending a few weeks with them prior to her marriage with the Duke of Mantua, which was to be celebrated with every magnificence early in the following spring.

The Marquis Carantani, with Mr. Montfort and his lady, passed three weeks with their friends at Naples; and it was during their stay that the Marquis di Salvo gave the most splendid fête to celebrate the marriage of his son. He then returned home, accompanied by Mr. Montfort and his lady, and the Marquis di Dalmina and Lady Carantani.

Mr. Montfort found, on his return, that the goods which he had sent out from England had safely arrived, and that his villa was now completed in the most beautiful order, and fit for their immediate occupation. They, therefore, took possession of it with every feeling of satisfaction and delight.

In two months after his return home, the Marquis di Dalmira led the lovely Lady Victoriana Carantani to the altar; and at the same time his younger brother, the Count Loretto, was united to the all-accomplished, lovely Lady Madelina Stainhault. The Marquis di Dalmira took his lovely bride home to his own villa; and the Count Loretto and his lady took possession of the delightful villa which had been the late residence of Lady Carantani. The Duchess of Castelamore, after her union with the Duke of Mantua, always passed two or three months every year at a charming villa she possessed, situated on the banks of the Averno.

Thus these early and sincerely-attached friends enjoyed each other's society once a-year at least; and frequently did Lozaro di Gracio and his lady, the lovely Janetta, visit among them. Time also added to the friendly circle the acquaintance of Rosano di Salvo and his lovely bride; for they were all present at the celebration of his nuptials with the Lady Amanda, except the Count Loretto and his bride. Thus the friendships which had been formed in youth were, by the hand of time, cemented into the most sincere and lasting acquaintance.

## CHAPTER XLI.

“ Oh ! may my life like her's be blest with peace ;  
And may I live like her in conscious pureness bold ! ”

“ Ah ! where shall I so sweet a dwelling find ? — *Thompson.* ”

The fête, which was sometime after the marriage of his son given by the Marquis di Salvo in celebration of that happy event, was held at the delightful villa belonging to Di Salvo, situated a few miles distant from the Villa Altieri, on the banks of the bay, and on the opposite shore to that which had been the frequent resort and the abode of pleasure during the life-time of the gay Marchioness di Salvo. The enchanting beauty and loveliness of its situation, and its interior elegance, induced Di Salvo and his lovely bride to select and fix upon it as their chief residence. It may be said, with truth, that it was a scene of fairy-land. Vineyards and orange-groves, the citron, the myrtle, and, indeed, every choice shrub and flower, decorated the pleasure-grounds, which extended over a valley opening to the bay, and the villa stood at the entrance of the valley, upon a gentle slope that margined

the water, and commanded the whole extent of its luxuriant shores from the lofty cape of Messina to the bold mountains of the south, which, stretching across the distance, appeared as if rising out of the sea, and divided the Gulf of Naples from that of Salerno. The villa was supported by marble pillars; and the beautiful white porticoes and arcades were shadowed by groves of the stately-looking magnolia, flowering ash, the lofty cedrati, the camellias, and majestic palms. The lofty, airy halls, opening on two opposite sides to a colonnade, admitted beyond the rich foliage all the seas and shores of Naples from the west; and to the east, the beautiful enchanting views of the valley of the domain, withdrawing among winding hills wooded to their summits, except where cliffs of various-coloured granite of yellow, green, and purple, lifted their tall heads, and threw gay gleams of light amidst the umbrageous landscape. The trees were crowded with the feathered tribes of every gay colour; and their lovely and enchanting warbling added to the lively brilliancy of the prospect. Myriads of the most rich and beautiful-coloured butterflies swarmed in the gardens, which were laid out in the most fanciful style, with lawns and groves, adorned with temples and elegant pavilions. The woods and undulating surface was that of England, and of the present day, rather than that of Italy, except where a long alley, peeping on the main, exhibited such gigantic loftiness of shade and grandeur of perspective as characterise the Italian taste.

On this jubilee every avenue and grove, pavilion and temple, was richly decorated and brilliantly illuminated. Every room, lofty hall, and arcade, was resplendent with

light, and lavishly decorated with the choicest flowers and most elegant and beautiful shrubs, whose buds seemed to pour all Arabia's perfumes upon the air. The villa and grounds altogether resembled a fabric and gardens called up by enchantment, rather than a structure of human art, or the earth cultivated by the hand of man and brought to such perfection. The dresses of the higher rank of visitors were as splendid as the scenery, of which the Lady Amanda was, in every sense of the word, the queen.

But this splendid fête was not given to persons of rank and distinction only; for it had been the express wish both of Di Salvo and his Amanda that all the tenants of the domain should be invited to partake of the entertainments, and share in the supreme and abundant happiness which they themselves possessed; so that the grounds, which were extensive enough to accommodate each rank, were relinquished to general gaiety.

Bardo and Annetta were on this occasion a sort of master and mistress of the revels; and Bardo, surrounded by a party of his own particular associates, danced once more, as he had so often wished, upon the moonlight shore of Naples.

As the evening set in, the lovely goddess of night did, indeed, beam with most resplendent brightness; and although poor old Annetta could not now dance as she was wont to do in her younger days, yet, seated beside the good old aunt Maria and the lively Clara, she sang many of her old love-songs, told many affectionate tales, and was as merry as the best of them. As for poor Maria, she laughed and cried for joy, and then laughed again, at the sight, or some of the views, of her angel mistress; for



she could scarcely see her—who, with the most benign looks, and with feelings of the most unfeigned gratitude, partook of a portion of the pleasure and happiness evinced on the occasion.

As Di Salvo and Amanda were passing the spot which Bardo had chosen for the scene of his festivity, they paused to enjoy for a few moments the festive scene, and to observe his strange capers and extravagant gesticulations, as he mingled in the merry dance; while every now and then he shouted forth, half-breathless with the heartiness of the exercise, “O giorno felice! O giorno felice!”

On perceiving Di Salvo, and the benevolent smiles with which he and Amanda regarded him, he quitted his sports, and advancing, “Ah! my dear master,” said he, “do you remember the night when we were travelling on the banks of the Celano, before that diabolical accident happened in the chapel there?—don’t you remember how those people, who were tripping it away so joyously by moonlight, reminded me of Naples and the many merry dances I have footed on the beach here?”

“I do—I remember it quite well, my good Bardo,” replied Di Salvo.

“Ah! signor mio, you said at the time that you sincerely hoped we should soon be here, and that then I should dance and frisk it away with as glad a heart as the best of them. The first part, my dear master, of your hope and good wishes you was out in; for as it happened, by San Paolo! we have had to go through the vilest purgatory before we could arrive at this delightful paradise. But, Santa Maria! the second part is come at last; for here I am, sure enough, and dancing by moonlight in my

own dear Bay of Naples, with my own dear master and mistress in safety, their hearts joined in one, and almost as happy as myself; and with that dear old mountain yonder, Vesuvius—which I, forsooth, thought I was never to see again—spouting up fire just as it used to do before we got ourselves put into that vile, abominable—allow me to say infernal—place, the Inquisition. Oh! who could have foreseen all this?—*O giorno felice! O giorno felice!*”

“Bardo,” said the Lady Amanda di Salvo, “I am indebted to you beyond my ability to repay; for to your intrepid affection your master owes his present safety. I will not attempt to thank you for your attachment to him, my care of your future welfare shall prove how well I know it: but I wish to give to all your friends this public testimony as an acknowledgment of your worth, and of my sense of it.”

Bardo bowed low, stammered, and writhed, and blushed, and was totally unable to make any reply for some moments: but at length, recovering from the embarrassment and confusion into which the praises bestowed upon him had thrown him, he gave a sudden and lofty spring from the ground, the emotion which had nearly stifled him burst forth in words, and “*O giorno felice! O giorno felice!*” flew from his lips with the force of an electric shock. They communicated his enthusiasm to the whole company; the words passed like lightning from one individual to another, till Di Salvo and Amanda were quite overcome, and withdrew amidst a choral shout; and all the woods and strand of Naples resounded with, “*O giorno felice! O giorno felice!*”

“You see,” said Bardo, when they had departed and he came to himself again, “you see how people get through their misfortunes, if they have but a heart to bear up against them, and do nothing that can lie on their consciences afterwards : and see how suddenly one comes to be happy, just when one is beginning to think one never is to be happy again. Who would have guessed that my dear master and I, when we were clapped up in that diabolical, abominable place, the Inquisition ?—who could ever have thought, I say, that we should have come out again into this world ? O Santa Maria ! who could possibly have guessed, when we were taken before those old, black, ugly-looking devils of inquisitors, sitting there all of a row in a place under-ground, all hung with black, and nothing but torches all round, and faces grinning at us that looked quite as black as those of the gentry aforesaid ; and when I was not so much as suffered to open my mouth—no, they would not let me open my mouth even to my master—who, I say, would have guessed we should ever have been let loose again ? Who would have thought we should ever have known again what it was to be happy ? Yet here we are, all abroad once more—all at liberty—all alive and kicking, I say—and may run, if we will, either crooked or straight-forward, from one end of the earth to the other and back again without ever being stopped or prevented. We may fly in the sea, or swim in the sky, or tumble over head and heels into the moon ; for remember, my good friends, we have no lead in our consciences to keep us down.”

“You mean swim in the sea and fly in the sky, I suppose,” observed a grave personage near him ; “but as for

tumbling over head and heels into the moon, I don't know what you mean by that."

"Pshaw! pshaw!" replied Bardo, "who can stop, at such a time as this, to think about what he means? I wish that all those, who on this night are not happy and merry enough to speak before they think, may ever after be grave enough to think before they speak. But none of you—no, not one of you, I warrant—ever saw the roof of a prison when your master happened to be below in the dungeon, nor knew what it is to be forced to run away and leave him behind to die by himself. Poor souls!—but no matter for that: you can—ah! you can be tolerably happy, perhaps, notwithstanding! But as for guessing how happy I am, or knowing anything about the matter. Oh! it's quite beyond what you can understand!"

"O giorno felice! O giorno felice!" repeated Bardo, as he bounded forward to mingle in the merry dance; and "O giorno felice!" was repeatedly shouted in full chorus by his joyful companions until the next morning dawned upon them, when Bardo led to the altar Miss Beatrice, a pretty black-eyed lass, whom he had for some time had a sly fondness for, and who had been his sole companion during the evening. The Marquis Di Salvo did not forget the marriage dower; nor did Amanda forget the wedding dress; nor did Bardo, as he clasped his pretty bride in a fond embrace, and imprinted on her blushing cheek the warm kiss of genuine affection, forget to sing as loud as he was able, "O giorno felice! O giorno felice!"

The authoress of the foregoing pages, having arrived at the conclusion of her work, entreats the indulgence of the reader for the numerous errors which, doubtless, may be observed; though she trusts her work is free from those glaring defects which lead aside the understanding, and which enervate and corrupt the heart. The first attempt of an author must be feeble. Difficulties without number interrupt his progress. One, not the least among them, is the fear of having his efforts crushed at once by the voice of the critic. If but a trifling degree of merit is allowed by the generous heart, who can regard the feelings of an author, these pages will not have been written in vain; for she will then experience a portion of that pleasure which will reward her for all her cares.









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